

HUD'S WEB PUBLICATION PROCEDURES AND STYLE GUIDE

HUD has three documents that describe the policies and procedures for web management:

- HUD's Web Management Organization and Policies: documents the Departmentwide web policies on which all procedures are based
- HUD's Web Publication Procedures and Style Guide: documents the procedures for publishing content and the content style rules for all of HUD's websites and for applications posted on HUD's websites and kiosks
- HUD's Web Management Operating Procedures: describes how we perform all the functions and activities associated with managing HUD's websites.

All HUD managers, Web Managers, Web Coordinators, and others who are involved in managing HUD's web products and related customer support should know and use these documents.

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INTRODUCTION

- Unless it's stated otherwise, all rules apply both to the Internet and intranet websites.
- HUD uses the *Associated Press Style Guide* to supplement this document. For anything not specifically covered in this document, the most current revision of the *Associated Press Style Guide* is the official source.
- Specific words that are commonly used on HUD's websites and that may be ambiguous or subject to multiple meanings are included in HUD's Website Dictionary, **Appendix A**.
- Questions or requests for exceptions to the requirements in this document should be addressed to the Departmental Web Team in the Office of Departmental Operations and Coordination.
- For questions about technical issues (preparing web pages, posting web pages, etc.) or to report technical problems, contact the Help Desk.

SECTION 1: COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS

1. **Accessibility:** All federal agencies are required by law to make their websites accessible to people with disabilities. HUD's standard templates have been designed to ensure that all federal accessibility requirements are met. Under no circumstances should templates be altered, since – in doing so – the pages may not be compliant with the accessibility requirements. Specific guidelines for keeping pages accessible are in **Appendix B**. Complete regulations governing web accessibility are available on the Section 508 website (www.section508.gov).
2. **Privacy (Internet only):** HUD is very concerned about ensuring the privacy of individuals who visit our Internet websites.
 - a. Each page on HUD's site, including the front page of each web-based application, must include a link to HUD's official privacy policy (<http://www.hud.gov/assist/privacy.cfm>).
 - b. Each link to an email form must incorporate the intercept page that explains HUD's privacy policy.
 - c. Use of "session cookies" (programming that retains information about a user only during that particular user session) is permissible.
 - d. Use of "persistent cookies" (programming that retains information about a specific user, from session to session) is prohibited. Requests for exceptions must be submitted to the Deputy Secretary, and a copy of the Deputy Secretary's written approval must be provided to the Departmental Web Managers and to the Chief Information Officer before persistent cookies are implemented.
3. **Records Management:** HUD has established a separate website to serve as the official record of web content to be transferred to the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). You can find instructions for reviewing and determining what should be moved to archives.hud.gov in the Web Management Operating Procedures.

You can find procedures for moving files to archives.hud.gov in **Section 9** of this document.

4. **Copyrights And Attribution:** As a rule, all content – including written materials and graphics - on HUD's Internet websites is in the public domain. Anyone can use or link to any material written or created for HUD's Internet websites.
 - a. Graphics used on the website should be owned by HUD and, therefore, in the public domain. If an organization purchases graphics for the website – and the purchase agreement specifies that the vendor retains the copyright – then that fact should be noted on the page and in the text box (alt tag).
 - b. If an organization publishes written materials reprinted from outside sources, the Web Manager must have written authorization from the holder of the copyright to publish the materials on HUD's website and the copyright must be noted on each page of the material.
 - c. Personal attribution (e.g., names of individuals or groups of HUD employees, contractors, or grantees) is not permitted on HUD's web pages.
 - d. Photos and graphics developed by grantees or contractors for HUD become the property of the Department and, therefore, are in the public domain.
5. **Paperwork Reduction And Paperwork Elimination:**
 - a. Official forms that are posted on HUD's website must display the official OMB clearance number and conform to all Department policies on design and approval of official forms.
 - b. Official forms must be posted in HUDClips, HUD's compendium of handbooks and forms. The only exceptions to this rule are "forms" that are incorporated in an online submission application.
 - c. Whenever possible, forms should be provided in "fillable" format, to make it easy for customers to use.

SECTION 2: COMPLIANCE WITH MANAGEMENT CONTROLS

6. **Templates:** HUD uses a standard template for all web pages, both Internet and intranet. The templates do a number of things for the Department:
 - a. They make the Department look like "one HUD."
 - b. They enable the Department to ensure that all web pages meet accessibility, privacy, and other requirements.
 - c. When the Departmental Web Team needs to make changes to the templates, all pages are updated quickly and easily.
 - d. All HUD web pages – both those on HUD servers and those housed on outside servers – must follow the standard HUD templates.
7. **Content Date:** Content must be dated to help us ensure that it is current.
 - a. For hud@work and Headquarters pages: the date that the **content was last updated** must appear at the bottom center of each page on HUD's Internet site. The Dreamweaver templates automatically provide an area to indicate the "last revised date." This date must be changed every time a significant content change occurs.

- b. For state pages: the date of the last certification must be show at the bottom of the page. The date will be reflected as “content current as of (date).”
- 8. **Testing Web-Based Applications:** Web-based applications must be cleared through the HUD Test Center, before they are posted to production.
- 9. **Metadata:** Metadata (words incorporated into the coding of pages but not visible on the pages) has a number of positive impacts. It captures information that can help us manage content more effectively, it helps search engines find our pages, and it helps aggregate content across organization boundaries. It is essential to incorporate appropriate and descriptive metadata according to the rules stipulated in **Appendix C** of this document.

SECTION 3: RULES ABOUT CONTENT

- 10. **Headquarters And Field Content Parameters:** To ensure that HUD’s websites are as concise and effective as possible, it is important to avoid duplication of effort.
 - a. Headquarters office content generally should be “generic” or “Departmentwide” in nature.
 - b. Headquarters offices should post content only within their organizational purview.
 - c. Information and services – including local information - that can come from national systems must come from those systems if at all possible. It is the responsibility of the Headquarters offices to ensure that local information generated by systems is presented in a customer-friendly manner.
 - d. Field office content should be exclusively information and services that only can be gathered and presented by local offices.
 - e. Local program office information appearing on state pages must comply with standard program templates developed with the Headquarters program offices. Any additions or changes to the local program office templates must be vetted through the Headquarters program managers. Once the Headquarters program office has approved an addition or change to the local program office templates, the Web Manager for that Headquarters organization will notify the Departmental Web Manager for Field Operations, who will make the change.
 - f. Local versions of national (generic) content are appropriate only to highlight local exceptions.
- 11. **Audience And Purpose:** For every page on HUD’s websites, the audience and purpose must be clear and unambiguous. In most cases, a brief introductory sentence or paragraph should be used to describe the purpose of the page. As a rule, a web page on our Internet websites should not attempt to address both “citizens” and “partners,” since these two audiences have very different perspectives.
- 12. **Writing And Organization:** Every page on HUD’s websites must meet HUD’s Web Writing Standards, **Appendix D**. HUD uses plain language both for Internet and intranet content. Writing tips can be found at: www.plainlanguage.gov. Plain language classes may be available in your area. Check with the Departmental Web Team if you are interested in attending one.

13. **Tone And Voice:** Web content should be conversational, as if you were speaking to the person.
 - a. Web content (sentences, paragraphs, link “teasers”) should be written in second person (for example, “We’ll show you how to use this page”). Segues between major content sections, too, should be conversational and in second person (“you”).
 - b. Web content should be written in the active voice.
 - Do: The web team wrote this document.
 - Don’t: This document was written by the web team.
 - c. Though it’s not necessary to use complete sentences, it is essential to use correct grammar. Complete sentences should be ended with a period. Incomplete sentences do not need to be ended with a period, unless they are within a paragraph. In that case, a period will help the reader know when one thought stops and another begins.
14. **Spelling And Proofing:** All web pages must be checked for spelling and grammatical errors before they are posted. Although Dreamweaver has a “Check Spelling” function, all content should be reviewed manually, as well, since automated spellcheckers do not catch every mistake or problem.
15. **State Pages (Internet Only):** To ensure that citizens across the country have the opportunity to find the same high quality information and services, no matter where they live, the local information or “state pages” on HUD’s Internet websites must follow a strict template, both in layout and in content. Specific guidelines for state pages can be found in **Appendix E**.
16. **Good Stories (Internet Only):** “Good Stories” are short write-ups about good things that are happening with HUD funds, programs, or initiatives and good things that are happening in communities, even if they aren’t using HUD funds. They are an important feature on HUD’s Internet websites. Guidelines for developing and posting Good Stories can be found in **Appendix F**.
17. **Features:** “Features” are short paragraphs, normally used on the front page or “home” page of a Headquarters Office section or state pages or regional hud@work pages.
 - a. Features should serve as teasers, providing very brief descriptions of new initiatives, new developments, or updates of high interest.
 - b. Features should change often.
 - c. Features normally should be no more than 3-5 lines in length; and normally, the features section should not exceed 25 lines in length.
 - d. Your features may contain a link to more information.
 - e. Features must have a sub-header.
18. **Highlights:** Highlights are **one-line** links, normally used to bring attention to new or updated information or a “hot” topic or issue. Highlights should be no more than one line. Highlights should be changed frequently (at least monthly; more often, if possible).
19. **Links And Teasers:**

- a. Links normally should be created as bullets underneath the narrative that explains them – not within the text – so they don't break up the text. For example:

HUD homes can be very good buys. Find out how you can buy a HUD home in your area.

[How to buy a HUD home](#)

[HUD homes in your area](#)

- b. In most cases, links should be the same exact words as the page header of the linked page, for example:

[Find lists of HUD homes for sale.](#)

- c. If additional information is needed to help the visitor understand why he/she would want to visit that link or how he/she can use the information found at the link, a "teaser" may follow the link title. Teasers should be short – never more than 2 lines.

[The Housing Choice Voucher Program](#) allows you to find your own place to rent, using the voucher to pay for all or part of the rent.

- d. If you are listing more than 5 links, normally you should break them into groups under sub-headers.

20. Time Zones: For events (broadcasts, webcasts, meetings, conferences, conference calls, etc.) that span time zones, provide both the Eastern Time (ET) and the Pacific Time (PT). That will help eliminate confusion for people living in other time zones.

Example: Webcast on SuperNOFA overview: 11:00 a.m. ET (8:00 a.m. PT).

21. Phone Numbers: Phone numbers will be shown as follows:

Example: (555) 555-5555

If there is an extension, the phone number will appear like this:

Example: (555) 555-5555, ext. 55

22. Translations (Internet Only): The most-used web content for citizens on www.hud.gov is translated for espanol.hud.gov.

- a. When new pages are developed, notify the Departmental Web Managers, who will determine if they should be translated.
- b. If content that has been translated is changed significantly – updated or expanded – in English, notify the Departmental Web Managers so it can be translated for espanol.hud.gov.
- c. Do not translate content on your own, without approval of the Departmental Web Team. HUD is striving for consistency in translations.

23. **News Releases (Internet Only):** News releases are posted only at the request of Public Affairs, in Headquarters, or the officially designated Public Affairs Officers (PAOs) in the Regions.
- a. Whenever possible, ***the national news release will serve as the only news release on a particular subject.*** So, for example, if a news release announces grants, then the state pages will link to the national news release to showcase local grant recipients.
 - b. If Regional PAOs choose to alter a national news release to give it local emphasis, then they are responsible for ensuring that any subsequent changes to the national release are picked up in the local release.
 - c. On state pages, links to both local news releases and national releases about grants will appear on a "Grant Announcements" page. The Grant Announcement's page will be the first link under "highlights" on the front of the state pages during grant announcement "season," and it will be a link on the "Local Newsroom" page.
24. **Photo Galleries:** "Photo Galleries" are slide shows that showcase the many ways HUD funds help communities. They are photo essays with short captions. The goal is to do a photo gallery for every state. In some cases, a state may have several photo galleries, organized by city or region. Photo galleries also are appropriate for Headquarters pages.
- a. The technical support contractor must resize photos for photo galleries for state pages. Regional Web Managers should submit the photo in full size (whatever format was used by the digital camera, preferably 1024X768) and allow the contractor to resize them.
 - b. Well-written captions are extremely important. Write at an elementary reading level. Avoid citing specific HUD programs by name or number, since program names and numbers are not meaningful to the audience.
 - c. Captions should be no more than 250 characters.
 - d. Captions must contain both the city and state name.
 - e. Photo galleries normally should be 5-10 photos.
 - f. Each photo in a photo gallery must have well-written alt tags, describing the photo
 - g. Choose a selection of photos that, when grouped together in the photo gallery, are interesting and show the breadth of HUD's programs. Avoid a series of photos of buildings. "Before and after" shots are a good way to show buildings. Photos with people in front of buildings or playing at community centers, etc. are good.
25. **Print Publications:** Print publications must be posted in PDF format or reformatted so they are web-friendly. Print publications must follow the same approval processes of any other web document. Information contained in PDFs must also be posted in a text file, to ensure that it is accessible.
26. **Newsletters:** Print materials do not read well on computer screens. If a HUD office prints and distributes a hard copy newsletter and, as a secondary way of distributing it, wants to post that newsletter on the website, we will post it in PDF format. The office must provide a "soft" copy of the newsletter to post. If the office wants to publish a newsletter on the web as the only or primary way of distributing it, then it must go into the HUD template and be published as a web page. Again, information contained in PDF files also must be posted in a text file, to ensure it is accessible.

27. **Terror Alert Level** - The terror alert level will be posted only on the front page of the national hud@work website. If specific regions or cities are at a different alert level, it will be noted in that box. Employees only have to check one place - the front page of hud@work - to find out the alert level. The Departmental Web Managers will update the terror alert level based on a) notification from the Office of Security and Emergency Planning, b) notification from the White House or a notice on the White House website, or c) notification from the Department of Homeland Security or a notice on the Homeland Security website, whichever comes first. If the alert level is changed after normal working hours, the status will be updated on hud@work as early in the morning as possible, the next working day.

SECTION 4: RULES ABOUT WEB PAGE DESIGN

28. **Functionality:**

- **Internet:** All HUD Internet web pages – including web-based applications – should work across all platforms. Specifically, they must function in Internet Explorer 4.x and later, Netscape 4.x and later, and text browsers. They also must function in PC, Macintosh, and Linux platforms.
- **Intranet:** Intranet pages must be accessible in the Department's standard browser., which is Internet Explorer 5.x and later.

Both hud.gov and hud@work templates have been designed to meet this standard; so as long as you don't try to alter them in any way, you will be compliant.

29. **Web-Based Applications:** Applications (interactive systems and services) that appear on HUD's websites must follow all of the rules and style standards in this document, as well as all application development standards issued by the CIO.

- a. When developing a web-based application, be sure to coordinate with the organization Web Manager and the Departmental Web Team. They can provide guidance to ensure that your application will work properly on HUD's website, and they'll be ready to link to your application in all the appropriate places on the site.
- b. If the application is designed to use "persistent cookies," the application owner must obtain permission from the Deputy Secretary to use that technology. Copies of the Deputy Secretary's approval must be provided to the Departmental Web Managers and the CIO.
- c. On the first screen of an Internet application, include a link to HUD's Internet home page: <http://www.hud.gov> and to espanol.hud.gov. On the first screen of an intranet application, include a link to hud@work's home page: <http://hudatwork.hud.gov>.
- d. Web-based applications should include a mail-to link or post a telephone number that users can use to ask questions and report problems.
- e. Web-based applications must include standard metadata on the front page of the application. Instructions on creating metadata can be found in **Appendix C**.

30. **Standard Colors:** HUD uses a palette of standard colors to ensure the common look and feel of its websites.

- a. Always use a white page background and black text (R:0 G:0 B:0, #000000).

- b. For graphics and other color features, use: red (R: 153 G:0 B:0, #990000); teal (R:0 G: 102 B: 102, #006666), gold (R: 255 G: 153 B:0, #FF9900), blue (R: 51 G:0 B:0, #330066), and green (R: 51 G: 102 B:0, #336600).
- c. Use approved background color (R:255, G:245, B:220, #FFF5dc) for table cells. To improve readability, alternate with a white background on every other row.

31. **Standard Fonts:** The standard font and size used for all basic text is Verdana size 2. The Verdana font was designed specifically for on-screen display, and it is rendered identically across all platforms and web-browsers. For the greatest cross-platform consistency, always use the following family of fonts: Verdana, Geneva, Arial, Helvetica, sans serif.

- a. By default, all text entered into the content section of HUD's templates is automatically displayed in size 2.
- b. Size 1 text should be used for all text in tables, lists, content boxes, and captions.

32. **Standard Headings:** Headings can be used to help organize information. The three predefined heading formats that may be used are:

- Heading 2 (for document subheadings),
- Heading 3 (for section headings) and
- Heading 4 (for section subheadings).

33. **Case:**

- a. Topics and headings (page headings, sub-headings, and section dividers) should be in title case. In title case, the first word and all principal words are capitalized, e.g., HUD Homes for Sale. Title case applies to:
 - Document titles (in the <TITLE> tag)
 - Page headings (in <H1> tag)
 - Page subheadings (in <H2> tag)
 - Section headings (in <H3> tag)
 - Section subheadings (in <H4> tag)
 - Inline headings (in tag)
 - Content box titles
 - Content item titles (but not delta links)
 - Topics
- b. Highlights and other links should be in sentence case. In sentence case, the first word of a sentence and all proper nouns in the sentence are capitalized, e.g., HUD homes for sale. Sentence case applies to:
 - List items
 - Links
 - Table headings
 - Button text

34. **Italics:** As a rule, HUD does not use italics for headers, sub-headers, links, or captions. In rare cases, italics may be used to add emphasis to a word within narrative.

35. **Page Headers:** Page headers (not to be confused with the “page title” that appears up in the blue bar at the top of the screen) are extremely important features of each web page. They should communicate – at a glance – the subject of the page. They also will serve as the text for any links to that page. So choose the wording of your page headers carefully.
- a. Page headers should be short – normally no more than 3-5 words
 - b. Page headers should be no more than one line
 - c. Page headers should use words that the target audience would be sure to understand
36. **Text:** Break text into short segments. Use headers or section dividers to help people get to the sections they want, quickly. Allow white space (blank areas) on your pages. White space provides eye relief, makes items easier to find, and creates a more attractive page. Put your most important information at the top of your page.
37. **Front Page:** The front page of a section or “home page” should be short and to the point (no more than 2 screens). For the most part, you should use it to highlight current or important developments and to help people get to other parts of the section.
38. **Page Length:**
- a. Front pages, topic level pages, and other pages that serve primarily as navigation (ie – links to other pages) normally should be no more than two screens.
 - b. Document level pages may be longer; but should not exceed 5 screens.
39. **Topics:** Topics should be chosen carefully, with all due consideration for the audience being served.
- a. When possible, choose words that are – or could be – common across federal websites.
 - b. Words used to describe topics must be easily understood by the audience and should not be ambiguous.
 - c. Topics for each major component of the websites – whether state pages, Headquarters office pages, or organization pages on hud@work - will be carried through the entire section.
 - d. Generally, each section should have no more than 6-10 topics. To the extent possible, all your topics should show in the first screen.
 - e. Topic titles should be short and punchy – normally no more than 3 words. Topic titles should fit on one line, if possible.
 - f. When possible, Headquarters offices should use the same wording for common topics (such as “about us”).
 - g. Normally, a section should be no more than 4 layers deep. This means you need to think hard about how you aggregate information into topics and sub-topics. Your audience will appreciate your efforts.
40. **Content Boxes:** Use “content boxes” to guide users to related links, to highlight important information, or to provide additional facts. When you use the following box titles, you should follow these protocols:

- **What's new** - Use “what's new” to highlight new regulations or requirements, new reports, new instructions, etc. Normally, items should remain in this box for a limited period of time (probably no more than 1 month).
- **More From HUD** - offers links to additional information about the particular subject from another part of HUD's websites.
- **Links**: links users to pertinent information on outside websites.
- **Did You Know?** - provides answers to questions that audiences might not think to ask. For example, “Did you know...that you can apply for public housing at more than one PHA?” “Did you know...that you need to see a HUD-approved lender to get an FHA loan?”
- **What's Your Opinion?** This is a great way to get feedback and to involve the public in policy issues. Normally, you should keep these short and current. For example: “HUD is selling homes at half price to police officers. What's your opinion?” The link should be a “mail-to” to an email box.
- **Quick Links** - highlights most frequently requested or most frequently used information.

41. **Anchor Tags Or “Jump To's”**: In some cases, anchor tags – which allow the user to “jump” farther down on the page – can be a good design practice. However, remember that if someone hits “print,” they'll print the whole page – not just the section they jumped to. A better practice is to create a series of related web pages. This may be easier for the user to handle and enable a user to print out specific pieces of content instead a large volume of information that they do not want or need.

42. **Highlighting “New” Items (Internet Only)**: A standard “new” icon may be used to highlight information on HUD's Internet sites. That is the only “new” icon that may be used on HUD websites. It will automatically expire 2 weeks after it's posted.

43. **Standard Links (Internet Only)**: The “Information By State,” “Email A Copy To A Friend” and “Printer Friendly Version” will appear on each document level page on HUD's Internet sites.

44. **Page Title**: The “page title” appears in the title bar of the visitor's browser, as the label in bookmarks to the page, and in search results lists and statistics reports. A page title should be concise and meaningful to the audience.

45. **Tables**: Tables are useful to create concise layouts and to create multi-column lists efficiently.

- a. Tables should be used to display tabular data and lists in an organized manner.
- b. Define tables with headings and with column and row labels to facilitate navigation for people with disabilities.
- c. Do not use borders on tables, since borders may display differently in different browsers and platforms.
- d. When possible, use the approved background colors to enhance readability.
- e. Do not use tables to isolate or highlight text on a page. Use content boxes and other template features to highlight important content.

46. **Frames:** HUD does not use frames on any pages of its websites. Frames add unnecessary weight to a web page, making it more difficult for people with slow modems to access the page.

SECTION 5: RULES ABOUT FILES

47. **HTML Coding:** HUD's templates are designed to handle a wide range of web page design requirements. In rare cases, you may need to work with the HTML code of a web page in order to display the content cleanly and correctly. If you work with the HTML code, the page must continue to meet all standards and requirements in this document, with particular emphasis on the accessibility (Section 508) requirements.
48. **JAVA And Javascript:** If JAVA and JavaScript are used, the page must remain Section 508 compliant and work across all platforms and web browsers. In addition, the web page must be coded in such a way that it will still function even if a visitor has disabled JAVA and JavaScript on the web browser. Do not use any scripting or tagging technologies - client- or server-side - other than those provided in HTML and by the standard templates. Using that kind of technology qualifies the page(s) as an application, which is subject to the HUD application development and release process.
49. **File Names:** All web page files should have short, meaningful names.
- Long titles should be abbreviated. For example, the "local homeless assistance agencies" web page has a file name of hmlsagens.cfm.
 - Known acronyms can be utilized in the name.
 - When selecting a name, consider how the name may be perceived. People do look at URLs and may misinterpret the meaning or intent of a file name.
 - All file and folder names should be alphanumeric.
 - Spaces cannot be used in a name, and you should **not** use underscores or hyphens.
50. **Case:** Web page file names are case sensitive. When you are entering a web page address in a browser, you must enter the address in the correct case (lower case, upper case or a combination). To avoid any confusion or problems, all file names and folder names on HUD's Internet and intranet sites are in **lower case**.

Do use: morereleases.cfm

Don't use: MoreReleases.CFM

51. File Name Extensions:

- Internet:** All new web pages created with Dreamweaver must have an extension of **.cfm**. Any existing web pages that are not yet converted (mainly older program and support office pages) have an extension of **.html**.

Do use: index.cfm

Don't use: index.html

- Intranet:** All web pages created in the [hud@work](#) template rolled out May 1, 2005 must have a .cfm extension.

52. **Folder Names:** Use clear and concise names to label the folders in which the web page files are stored.

Do use: volunteering

Don't use: federalvolunteerprograms

53. **Naming Your First Page:** The first page or "front page" of your section should be named "index.cfm." (both Internet and intranet).

54. **Application Files (Internet Only):** A system file named application.cfm already exists in the various folders holding the HUD offices' web page files. This system file contains information that enables the web pages for an office to render and function properly. Therefore, you must not name a web page file "application.cfm." You must not move, modify or delete the existing application.cfm system file.

55. **File Types:**

a. **Internet:**

- HUD strives to make its website accessible to the broadest possible audience; thus, only common web formats should be used on HUD's Internet website. Acceptable formats for the Internet site include .jpg, .gif, .pdf, and .txt.
- When communicating and sharing files with business partners, the .doc, .xls, .zip, and .exe formats also are acceptable; however, add a link to the free reader, where available.

- b. **Intranet:** For hud@work, any file type specified for the Internet or any file types supported by standard HUD desktop software are acceptable.

- c. **Powerpoint:** In general, you should not be posting Powerpoint files. You may consider using a Powerpoint if you want to allow the audience to download it and use it for their own presentations. But even then, consider your audience carefully. Powerpoint files have a number of issues: it is very difficult to ensure that they are accessible, they use proprietary software, and they tend to be very large files for downloading.

The accessibility issues are compelling. The free Powerpoint reader is not accessible, so if the visitor does not have Powerpoint software on his/her computer, he/she will not be able to use the file. If you do post Powerpoint files, you must make them compliant with 508 requirements. That means they must have alt tags on every page, providing both the text and description of the images.

Another factor to consider is that Powerpoint presentations normally are used with a presenter in the room to explain the bullets and charts. When people look at a Powerpoint presentation on the web, they don't have the benefit of that live person to give them the context and meaning of the bullets on the presentation.

- d. If you want to use a file type that is not specified here, contact the Departmental Web Team before using it.

56. **Audio And Video Files:** HUD's standard media format for audio and video files is Real Media. In some cases, audio files that are 30 seconds or less may use .wav files.

HUD's media files are "streamed" from dedicated media servers – not downloaded from the Internet or intranet web servers themselves. Contact HUD's Departmental Web Team if you need to publish rich media to the Internet or intranet.

57. **Virus Protection:** All executable files (for example, .exe, .bat or .com extensions) **must** be scanned for viruses using the most recent version of HUD-standard virus-scanning software before being posted to the website.

58. **File Size:** To keep HUD's websites as accessible as possible, we try to limit the size of each page.

- **Internet:** The total size of a web page on HUD's Internet site - including the basic template plus all graphics, pictures, and text - should **not** exceed 100Kb. The Dreamweaver templates have a base size of approximately 20Kb before any content is added to them, so be sure to factor that number into the total page weight.
- **Intranet:** For intranet pages, do not exceed a total page weight—including images, scripts, linked and included files, and dynamic content—of 200 Kbytes.

59. **Redirects:** When you need to convert an old web page file (from .html to .cfm), move an existing web page file to another address, or delete a file, you may be creating a broken link in the website.

To develop a redirect:

- Check the web map posted in the "Web Management" section on hud@work to find any web pages that link to the page you are about to move or delete.
- Notify the appropriate Web Managers so they can change their links.
- Create the redirect page. As a safeguard against potentially broken links, a copy of the web page file that you need to convert, move or delete remains in production in its current location. However, the code of the file is replaced with a forward script that redirects the user to the new web page (when converting), the new location (when moving) or another web page (when deleting). By creating these redirects with the forward script, you send the users to the appropriate page/location and provide them the opportunity to update their respective bookmarks and links.
- ***As a rule, a redirect page should be deleted when it's been up 6 months.***

60. **Aliases:** Aliases – shortened URLs – can be very useful when you want to market a particular page on the website or if you find that HUD staff frequently are directing customers to a certain page. For example:

<http://www.hud.gov/library/bookshelf15/webclinics/index.cfm>

also can be reached by going to this alias:

<http://www.hud.gov/webclinics>

The alias is shorter, punchier, and easier to remember.

To establish an alias for a specific web page, the Web Manager must email a request to the Departmental Web Manager for Headquarters Operations, including the following:

- Current URL of the page
- Proposed alias URL
- Date alias is required
- Date alias can expire (if appropriate)

The Departmental Web Team may reserve certain aliases for Secretary, Deputy Secretary, or Public Affairs initiatives.

SECTION 6: RULES ABOUT LINKS

61. **Linking Policy:** Be sure you're familiar with HUD's linking policy...and follow it (see HUD's Web Management Organization and Policies).

62. **Intercepts:**

Internet:

a. You **must** include a "intercept" when:

- Linking to a non-federal government website,
- Linking to an email form or mailto link on www.hud.gov or espanol.hud.gov, or
- Linking to a PDF file.

The intercept inserts an intermediate page that provides information needed to meet legal and regulatory requirements.

b. You do NOT use an intercept when linking to a website with a .gov or .mil domain.

c. For www.hud.gov, use /utilities/intercept.cfm for external links, mailto, pdf, and external pdfs

- Sample external link:
<http://www.hud.gov/utilities/intercept.cfm?http://www.innovations.harvard.edu/>
- Sample external PDF link:
<http://www.hud.gov/utilities/intercept.cfm?http://www.psc.gov/forms/sf/SF-85.pdf?>
- Sample internal PDF link:
<http://www.hud.gov/utilities/intercept.cfm?/offices/hsg/mfh/gendocs/mfhrrr.pdf>
- Sample email link:
<http://www.hud.gov/utilities/intercept.cfm?mailto:joejane@hotmail.com>

Intranet:

d. You only need to use the intercept for PDF files (for Section 508 purposes). No intercept is needed for internal email links or internal PDF files.

Both Internet and Intranet

e. Intercept scripts must specify the full path, to work correctly:

Do: /utilities/intercept.cfm?/offices/hsg/mfh/gendocs/mfhrr.pdf

Don't: /utilities/intercept.cfm?/mfhrr.pdf

63. **Format:** There is no need for any special formatting to highlight links on a page. Links automatically display as bold, underlined text in the appropriate color.

64. **Defining A Link:** The words that are underlined, leading to a link, should describe what the user would find at the linked page. Software that “reads” the link to a person with visual problems literally reads the words that are underlined.

Do use: Visit our listings of homes for sale

Don't Use: Click here for listings of homes for sale

65. **Listing Links:**

a. Lists of links should appear in “sentence case” (first letter of first word capitalized and no other capitalization except for proper nouns, acronyms, abbreviations).

Do use: Visit our listings of homes for sale

Don't use: Visit Our Listings Of Homes For Sale

b. When using a list of links, list them in alphabetical order unless:

- Links intentionally follow chronological order or
- Links intentionally lead the user through a logical sequence, e.g.,
 - Housing counseling
 - Homes for sale
 - HUD-approved lenders

66. **Case:** Links are case sensitive; so the case of the folders, file names and extensions must match the case of the URL of the web page to which you're linking.

67. **Internal Links:** When creating a link to another page on HUD's website, do NOT include “www.hud.gov” in the URL. All you need to use is the part of the URL that follows “www.hud.gov.” This applies to both Internet and intranet.

Do use: /offices/ftheo/index.cfm

Don't use: www.hud.gov/offices/ftheo/index.cfm

68. **Testing Links:** Be sure to test all links on a web page to ensure that the URL is current and that the information in the linked page loads in a reasonable amount of time. In consideration of our audience members who use slow modems, we do **not** use links to sites with long load times.

69. **Links To Commercial Sites:** You may link to a commercial for-profit web page or website if it is clear that the primary purpose of the page or site is to provide free information or services. As a rule, links may not promote specific for-profit products or services.

- a. It is permissible to link to the home pages and/or email addresses of a category of private for-profit HUD partners (for example, HUD approved lenders) when it will promote HUD's program and customer service objectives.
 - A complete list of the vendors in that category must be posted (both those with and those without websites/ email)
 - All vendors in that category must be notified that HUD will be creating links to the websites/ email addresses of those that have them, before any links are posted
 - Links must include the interceptor page with HUD's disclaimer

70. Required Links:

- a. **FirstGov Link:** Every page on HUD's Internet websites must link to the federal government's web portal, FirstGov. The link will be built into the templates for HUD's web pages. The FirstGov link also should be built into any online applications.
- b. **White House Link:** The White House link will be incorporated in the front page of www.hud.gov and espanol.hud.gov.

SECTION 7: RULES ABOUT GRAPHICS

- 71. Photos And Graphics:** Be judicious in the use of photos and graphics. Remember that we want to keep the weight of each page to a minimum so that people using slow modems can access the website. Be sure to follow guidance on total page weight.

- a. Make sure photos and graphics add value to the content. Every image and graphic should have a reason to be on the page.
- b. Keep graphics simple.

- 72. The Website "Brand:":** To ensure that HUD's websites are easily recognizable, each has a standard "brand" that is used.

- a. On www.hud.gov, espanol.hud.gov, and archives.hud.gov, the "Homes and Communities" brand must appear on each page, as created in the template. In addition, the HUD seal must appear at the bottom of the page, along with the Headquarters address and a link to the addresses of the HUD Field offices.
- b. On hud@work, the brand is the name of the website: hud@work. It must appear on every page.
- c. As a rule, no other branding should appear on HUD's websites, with the exception of icons or logos established by the Office of Public Affairs to promote specific Secretarial initiatives or efforts.

73. Image And Graphic Types:

- a. The two primary image formats used are .gif (Graphic Interchange Format) and .jpg (Joint Photographic Experts Group). For best results, save all drawings, graphs, etc., in the .gif format; and save all photographs in the .jpg format.
- b. Any images or graphics that were created in another format (e.g., .tif) must be converted to either .gif or .jpg prior to posting on a web page. **Note** that when you convert an image or graphic, certain aspects such as color or fonts may be affected.

- c. Other forms of image and graphics files may be acceptable, as long as they work with most web browsers. Before you use another format, however, you should check with the Departmental Web Team.
- d. If you are creating images or graphics that will be posted on the website for the audience to download and use in print publications, then use the .tif format. These images should be saved at a minimum of 300dpi. Note: .tif formatted files will not display on the web page. You should link to the file using the <a href> tag so the user can download the file.

74. **Image And Graphic Specifications:** If you are offered different “save” options for the .gif format, save the graphics as “89a Non-Interlaced .gif files.” If you are offered “compression” options for the .jpg format, experiment with different compression levels to determine the best balance between image quality and file size.

The quality of a .jpg image degrades every time the image is edited and saved. If you need to edit an image, you should always go back to the original source file, edit it, and then save it as a separate .jpg file.

75. **Thumbnails:** When it is advantageous to put more than one photo on a page – for example, if you are showing photos of homes for sale – then use thumbnail versions of the photos, to keep the page size within reason.

- a. All horizontal images should be 100 x 75, and all vertical images should be 75 x 100.
- b. hud@work images can be 115 pixels wide.

76. **Colors:** Images and graphics should use at least 256 colors and a color depth equal to or greater than 8 bits.

77. **Sizes:** The recommended size of an image (in pixels) is 200x133. The maximum recommended size of any image or graphic is 240x160. Remember that all images and graphics should be designed to work within at least the 640x480 monitor resolution.

78. **Cropping:** Minimize any extraneous background space in an image by “cropping” the image. This will help focus attention on the subject of the photo and reduce the overall size of the image.

79. **Borders:** Photographs and some graphics (e.g., street maps) should have a 1-pixel border (border="1"), with the default (i.e., undefined) border color. Graphics, such as logos, icons, and graphical text should **not** have a border (border="0").

80. **Height and width:** The height and width of all images and graphics should be indicated (e.g., height="133" width="200"). **Note** that the height and width **must** be the exact height and width of the image or graphic. If you use different values in an attempt to “force” an image or graphic into a desired space, you will distort the image or graphic.

If you need to resize an image or graphic, it is best to do this with HUD-approved graphics software. Save the resized image or graphic and then include it on the web page in the desired height and width.

81. **Vertical Space And Horizontal Space:** Vertical space (Vspace) and horizontal space (Hspace) is the space around an image or graphic on a web page. The Vspace and Hspace should always be "0"
82. **Text Labels:** Every image or graphic **must** have a text box or text label (the <alt> tag). This text label describes the picture or graphic to people using a text-based browser and people with disabilities using a text reader. The text label must describe the photo or image for those who cannot see it.
- Do:** Describe a photo of the Secretary meeting volunteers as: "photo1: the Secretary meets volunteer workers who are providing meals and drinks at a shelter in New York City"
- Don't:** Describe a photo of the Secretary meeting volunteers as: "Secretary meets volunteers"
- Be sure to enclose the text message in brackets to enable it to stand-alone and separate it from other text messages. If the graphic is all text, then the alternative text message should duplicate that text. For example, the message for a graphic that states "Homeless Assistance" would simply be "[Homeless assistance]."
83. **Text Alternatives:** Where image maps and other graphic navigational aids are used, alternate text-only links must be available for users who use text-based browsers. This includes information displayed on mapping applications.
84. **Animated Graphics:** HUD does not use animated graphics on its websites. Animated graphics add significant weight to a page, and they don't work with all web browsers. Furthermore, they may present problems for people with disabilities. If you want to use an animated graphic, you must get permission from the Departmental Web Team first.
85. **Storage:** If a graphic or image is only used on one web page, the graphic or image file should be stored in the same folder as that web page. If the graphic or image is used on multiple web pages, the graphic or image file should be stored in the most appropriate "images" folder.

SECTION 8: RULES ABOUT POSTING

86. **Posting Rights:** The Departmental Web Manager for Headquarters Operations assigns posting rights. Regional Web Managers use a content management system for updating the state pages. Policies for managing posting rights are defined in HUD's Web Management Operating Procedures.
87. **Storage And Testing:** All web pages and their associated images and graphics associated with them are stored in the development area. Files may not be posted to the "live" production server – where they can be viewed by the public – until they have been reviewed and tested to ensure they meet all technical requirements and until the content has been approved by all appropriate authorities within the organization.
- a. As a reminder, any content of a political or policy nature must be approved by the Office of Public Affairs, before posting.

- b. All web pages should be reviewed and tested within a web browser to ensure that they display properly, all links work, etc.
- c. Regardless of the format, all executable files that are to be posted to the website **must** be scanned for viruses using the most recent version of HUD-standard virus-scanning software.

88. **Removing Files:** Web content must be reviewed at least quarterly to ensure that it is current and accurate. Files that are obsolete should be evaluated to determine if they should be moved to archives.hud.gov or removed from the production server immediately. As a rule, you should maintain a copy of the file, in case it is requested under the Freedom of Information Act or in a legal action. Remember that as long as a file exists on the production server, both HUD's search engine and outside search engines can find it.

SECTION 9: RULES ABOUT ARCHIVING

89. **Archives.hud.gov:** Archives.hud.gov contains HUD's historical documents, data, and other information that may have value to researchers and the public. It separates historical documentation from current information. Archives.hud.gov ensures citizens can access information about past programs, administrations, initiatives, and activities of the Department. Refer to HUD's Web Management Operating Procedures for guidance on what to archive and disposition schedules.

a. Transferring Content To Archives.Hud.Gov

- As part of the quarterly certification process, managers must identify content that should be archived and submit those pages to the organization Web Manager.
- Web Managers will notify the Departmental Web Team of the content to be archived.
- The Web Team will determine where the content should reside on archives.hud.gov and will have it added to the website accordingly. The Web Manager may delete the content from the public website only after ensuring the content is archived.
- When content is archived, it will be "clustered" as much as possible, transferring an entire project, text, graphics, and other associated files as an entire entity into a single directory.
- Content will retain its original design—pages will not be redesigned when archived.
- The title for each page will be modified by adding "HUD ARCHIVES:" to the beginning of the title. (e.g., HUD ARCHIVES: Henry G. Cisneros Biographical Information)
- Once content is posted to archives.hud.gov, and verified for technical accuracy, no further changes will be made.
- The date the content is archived will be entered into the metadata for the page.
- The language at the bottom of the archived documents will change from "content current as of..." or "content last updated..." to "content archived on (date)"

b. Linking Policy For Archives.hud.gov

- The archives.hud.gov website links only to standard, fixed pages on www.hud.gov (e.g. www.hud.gov/news) and to other pages in archives.hud.gov.
- A page which links to documents not already existing on archives.hud.gov will have those links stripped out so the page can stand-alone.
- There will be no links to external websites other than to whitehouse.gov, firstgov.gov and NARA.

SECTION 10: RULES ABOUT MAILING LISTS, DISCUSSIONS, REAL-TIME CHATS, CALENDARS, AND WEBCASTS

90. **Mailing Lists** (sometimes called "listservs") are a great way to let website visitors subscribe for updates about a particular subject or to help managers generate mass emailings to a routine set of customers. A mailing list can be a great customer service. For example, visitors who use our webcasts can sign up to be notified of all future webcasts. That way, they don't have to keep checking the schedule.

Mailing lists can handle thousands of email addresses.

- a. **Requesting A Mailing List:** Requests for mailing lists must come through the organization's Web Manager. The Web Manager must request the mailing list via email to the Departmental Web Team. The request must include 4 pieces of information:
 - Name of the mailing list (e.g., HUD lenders)
 - Name of the HUD staff person who will manage the mailing list
 - Whether you want the list to be "open" (anyone can sign up for it) or "closed" (only the list owner can decide who goes on the list).
 - A short (less than 30 words) description of the purpose of your list.
Once the mailing list is established, the Departmental Web Team will let the list manager know how to proceed.
- b. **Internal Mailing Lists:** Mailing lists are typically for communicating with people outside of HUD. If you want to set up a mailing list for HUD staff, you have three choices:
 - If the list is small (fewer than 50 people), use the "group" function of your personal Address Book within Lotus Notes to create these mailing lists.
 - If the list contains between 50 and 500 HUD staff, submit a request for a mailing list to Lotus Notes, through your Office Technical Coordinator. They will create the list for your use.
 - If the list contains more than 500 HUD staff, the Departmental Web Team will set up a mailing list for you. Follow the procedures above. You will need to provide the Internet email address of each HUD staff person to be added to the list in a text file, with each name on a separate line.
- c. **Mailing List Configuration:** All Internet-based mailing lists will be configured by default as
 - "Announcement only" — the listowner will be the only one who can send an email to the list. Members of the list will only be able to respond to the listowner. Exceptions to the announcement only requirement, to allow for discussions among the list participants, may be requested from the Departmental Web Team and will be granted on a case-by-case basis.

- “Confirmation required” — the email will not be sent to the list until the listowner responds to a confirmation message sent from the server.
 - Instructions on how to be removed from the list must appear in the message notifying members that they have subscribed.
- d. **Advertising Mailing Lists:** Public mailing lists will be listed on HUD’s Internet website (and their availability will appear in Internet searches), unless the listowner specifically ask for the list to remain “confidential.” Mailing lists of HUD staff will automatically be set as “confidential.”
- e. **Approvals:** The Assistant Secretary or his/her designee, in Headquarters, and the Regional Director, Deputy Regional Director, Field Office Manager or their designees, in the Field, must approve the mailing list before the Web Manager submits the request to create the list.
- f. **List Membership:** *Mailing lists should include only email addresses of people who have specifically requested to be added.* Email addresses for people who want to be on a HUD mailing list will be maintained only for the purpose of that mailing list. They will not be used for any other purpose within the Department nor will they be provided to anyone outside the Department.
- g. **Monitoring Mailing Lists:** Web Managers are responsible for monitoring the mailing lists in their organizations and trouble-shooting problems. You must contact your mailing list owners at least quarterly to ensure that the list is still being used.
91. **Discussions:** Discussions, sometimes called “chat rooms,” are a good way to get feedback, work in groups, and share ideas.
- a. Discussions must be for official purposes only (no “water cooler” type discussions).
- b. Discussion rooms, both on the Internet and intranet, must be requested through the appropriate Office/Regional Web Manager. Once approved by the appropriate management official, the Office/Regional Web Manager should forward the request to the Departmental Web Team. Requests must include:
- Name of the office hosting the discussion (e.g., Office of Housing)
 - Title of the discussion (e.g. “FHA Lenders”)
 - Introductory paragraph that will appear on the discussion page, describing the purpose and rules (if any) of the chat
 - Name and email address of the discussion moderator
 - If participation is to be limited, then include a proposed Login ID (e.g., housinglenders) and password (e.g., mortgage)
- c. If the discussion room could entertain questions or comments that require interpretation of HUD or federal laws or policies, then the moderator must be a HUD employee or a HUD employee must respond to those questions. Policy interpretation can be done only by HUD employees.
- d. Web Managers should remind discussion room moderators to review their discussions routinely to make sure that the discussion is on track.
- e. Web Managers should ensure that managers review the need for their discussion rooms each quarter, as part of the certification process. Obsolete discussion rooms should be pulled down.
92. **Real-time chats (Person-to-Person):** Real-time chats technology allows HUD to offer one-on-one interaction through the web, in “real” time. They permit offices to do such things as provide one-on-one housing counseling. At HUD, we call our real-time chat technology, “Person-to-Person.”

- a. **Requesting a Real-Time Chat:** Web Managers can request a real-time chat by emailing the Departmental Web Team. The request must include the following:
 - Name of the office hosting the chat (e.g., Office of Housing)
 - Title of the chat (e.g. "FHA Lenders")
 - Purpose of the chat (e.g., answer first-time homebuyer questions online)
 - Introductory paragraph that will appear on the chat page, describing the purpose and rules (if any) of the chat
 - Name and email address of the chat room moderator (must be a HUD employee)
 - Start and end dates of the chat
 - Hours that the chat will be available (e.g., 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. ET, Monday through Friday)
 - Name and number of the program manager responsible for the chat
- b. **Staffing a Real-Time Chat:**
 - Web Managers should confirm with the program manager that adequate staffing resources are available to provide services we advertise through real-time chats, before making the request to the Departmental Web Team.
 - If the chat could entertain questions or comments that require interpretation of HUD or federal laws or policies, then a HUD employee must be available to respond to those questions. Only HUD employees can do policy interpretation.

93. **Calendars:** HUD offers an online calendar that can be used to notify people about training, meetings, deadlines, and other important events. Calendars can be established for specific groups or for the general audience, both inside and outside of HUD. Calendar owners can update the calendar him/herself.

- a. We have one Departmental calendar on hud.gov that is maintained by the Departmental Web Team. If you have important events that are nationwide in interest, send the details to the Web Team.
- b. While calendars can be very useful tools, they must be maintained regularly or the audience will stop checking them. Calendars must be reviewed as part of the quarterly certification process, to ensure that they are current. Calendars that are not being maintained should be pulled down.
- c. To create a calendar, the Web Manager must send a request to the Departmental Web Team with the following information:
 - Name, organization, and HUD of the calendar owner
 - Duration of the calendar (in other words, is this calendar to be up permanently or for a specified period)
 - Placement of the calendar (Internet or intranet)Once the calendar has been created, the owner will receive instructions on how to access it.
- d. Calendar owners must be careful to ensure that calendar entries do not violate laws, regulations, or policies related to using federal public websites for advertising. Web Managers must advise calendar owners of those policies before the request is submitted and must review calendars during the certification process to ensure they comply.
- e. See **Appendix G** for additional guidance on managing the content of calendars.

94. **Webcasts** - live or taped video offered through the website - offer an excellent means for providing training and consumer information and for conducting online meetings.

- a. Webcasts may be used only for official mission-related purposes.
- b. Webcasts must include captioning for the hearing-impaired. In most cases, your organization will have to pay for the captioning. If you are doing your own taping – or hiring a contractor to tape for you – and you intend to provide the tape to the Web Team for webcasting, you must be sure to include the captioning in the taping process.
- c. The Broadcasting Branch in the Office of Administration creates webcasts. To schedule a webcast, contact the Broadcasting Branch to arrange the video taping or broadcast of your program. Coordinate funding with your administrative officers.
- d. If you just have a videotape of an event that has already occurred, the Broadcasting Branch can webcast it. Videos produced in Beta SP or SVHS produce the best quality webcast.
- e. The Departmental Web Team will only post webcasts on the website in coordination with the Broadcasting Branch and/or a program office Web Manager.
- f. When your webcast is ready to be aired, notify the Departmental Web Team. Provide a 2-3 line description of the program, let us know who the audience is for the program: HUD employees only or the public/business partners, and give us recommendations about where you would like links to appear.
- g. Webcasts that are only for HUD employees appear on the hud@work webcast page. Notices about upcoming webcasts are normally posted there the Friday before the week they are to occur. The link to the webcast becomes active 1/2 hour before the broadcast starts. Programs are placed in the hud@work webcast archives by the next morning for viewing at a later date
- h. Webcasts for the public can appear on the hud.gov webcast schedule as soon as date, time, and description for the program are provided to the Departmental Web Team. On the day of the program a “live” announcement for the program is placed on the main webcast page. The webcast is placed in the hud.gov webcast archives by the next morning for viewing at a later date
- i. Instructions for archiving webcasts on archives.hud.gov are being developed.
- j. Employees who have technical trouble viewing a webcast should be directed to call in a STARS ticket.
- k. Video for an external audience must be streamed at 100K and 28K.

APPENDIX A: HUD'S WEB DICTIONARY

The following list provides the spelling and definition for certain commonly used words at HUD. Unless specified below, refer to the Associated Press Style Guide for correct spelling.

- Website (one word)
- Email (no hyphen)
- References to the Nation's capitol should be "District of Columbia." The word "Washington" will refer to the state of Washington.
- "Field" is capitalized when referring to that component of HUD's organization.
- Online should be one word - no hyphen
- Web Manager is two words, and both are capitalized

APPENDIX B – WEB ACCESSIBILITY GUIDELINES

1. You must provide a text equivalent for every non-text element.

What this means: You must create an “alt tag” for images, captioning for audio/video, and text descriptions of maps, charts, or graphs. Anything other than text, must have a description.

2. Real-time, synchronized captioning must be provided for multimedia presentations (including video/audio/etc.).

What this means: Webcasts, audio files, and any multimedia presentation that plays on its own, must have synchronized text captioning.

3. If you use color for navigation, to give text emphasis, or to convey meaning, you have to provide a text alternative.

What this means: If color is used for any reason other than appearance, you must describe what the color is trying to convey. For example if you use color to highlight text, you need to explain why the text is highlighted and what the color means. If you use color to convey meaning (for example, different colors represent different homeless rates on a map), then you must provide an explanation (for example, the northwest quadrant of the city map has higher homeless rates than the southeast quadrant).

4. If you use style sheets, be sure that the page will still be usable if someone has a browser that doesn't support style sheets.

What this means: Test your page in a browser with style sheets disabled to ensure that the page can be read and navigated, before you post to production.

5. Provide text links alternatives if you use server-side image maps.

What this means: If you must use server-side image maps (the server handles the coordinates rather than the browser), you must provide text alternatives.

6. Use client-side image maps whenever possible

What this means: Client-side image maps rely on the browser to equate a portion of an image to a link. These types of image maps are more accessible to those with disabilities.

7. Be careful how you use tables. Ensure the page makes sense to someone using adaptive technologies.

What this means: If you follow HUD's templates, you shouldn't have any problems. If you develop your own pages and use tables for design purposes, lay out the tables so that text can be read one column at a time, versus across rows.

8. Pages must be usable when scripts are turned off or are not supported, or you must provide equivalent information on an alternative accessible page.

What this means: First, a website visitor must be able to use your pages if they are using a browser that doesn't support scripting (such as JavaScript). Second, your scripts should be coded so that browsers don't display or read the scripts (e.g., comment out JavaScript coding).

9. If you are going to require a plug-in you must provide a link to a compliant plug-in

What this means: If your pages contain links to audio, video, or anything else requiring a plug-in, you must also provide a link to an ADA compliant plug-in. If there isn't an accessible/compliant plug-in, then you cannot use that format. This requirement applies to applications as well. If you post PDF files, you must post the information in a text version as well.

10. Electronic forms shall be accessible to people using adaptive/assistive technologies.

What this means: If you use PDF files for your forms, you need to comply with (9) above. If you have online forms, they must be usable for someone using an assistive browser, such as JAWS for Windows.

11. Users of assistive technology should be given the option to skip repetitive navigation links.

What this means: We will handle this with the templates, but – essentially - if you have the same navigation on all of your pages, you should provide an option that allows someone to skip the repetition.

12. If a timed response is required, the website visitor must be notified when a process is about to time-out and be given an opportunity to ask for more time.

What this means: If you have an application or form that requires an answer or submission within a specific period of time (for example, 5 minutes) before the process "times out," you must give the user the opportunity to ask for more time.

You can find more information about making your webpages compliant with Section 508 accessibility requirements at: <http://www.section508.gov/>

APPENDIX C: METADATA GUIDELINES

Introduction

Metadata can be a powerful tool for managing information and ensuring the public can find what they need on our websites efficiently. This document provides implementation guidance on how to include metadata on web pages for www.hud.gov, hudatwork.hud.gov, and espanol.hud.gov. While most of the metadata elements addressed here are recommended by the Web Content Standards Working Group of the Interagency Committee on Government Information to be placed on the home page and all major entry points, we at HUD will use some additional elements. In addition, we hope to place metadata on most, if not all, web pages comprising our websites.

What Is Metadata?

Metadata is information which describes an item, not the item itself. In web terms, Metadata doesn't actually appear on a web page but describes the contents and attributes of the page. (If you want to see the metadata, you have to reveal the HTML codes. For example if you look at <http://www.gc.ca/> you'll see the metadata as the collection of lines starting with <meta> in the <head> portion of the web page.)

Metadata is used by search engines and other automated tools to help users find the information they need more efficiently. Think about a library card catalog. A card catalog doesn't contain the books or periodicals, but contains data relating to them: their titles, authors, publishers, published date, etc. So, a card catalog would be a collection of Metadata. Another example is a department store catalog: it lists the items, brand, price, color, capacity, etc. All this information could be thought of as Metadata.

Why Is Metadata Important?

Metadata is important for three major reasons:

- We want to create information that will help our readers find what they want based on specific criteria: title, creator, date, subject, audience, etc. For example, what if our readers want all the speeches given by a particular Secretary? Maybe they want everything related to Senior Citizens. Or, maybe they are interested in all speeches given by Secretary Martinez in 2002 related to Senior Citizens. Metadata will enable us to help them find this information.
- Metadata will help us manage our sites better. Using Metadata, we will be able to quickly find old, outdated content (content with dc.date.valid dates from a year ago, for example). Using the dc.creator element, we'll be able to quickly determine who "owns" a particular page (regardless of where the page resides on the website).
- Metadata will allow information to be tracked and assembled government-wide. If all federal agencies use the same set of Metadata the same way, we can do a search to find all the home-buying programs across the federal government, or find all the pages across the federal government that were created for a senior citizen audience group.

As you can see, Metadata can be a very powerful tool in managing and accessing information on the Internet and intranet. This is why creating good metadata is so important.

What are metadata elements?

You've already seen a couple of the elements we'll be using: `dc.creator` is the element which captures who created or owns a particular web page. A metadata element is simply the type of information we will capture. For example, the Title of a document is one "element," Subject is another element. For metadata to be truly useful, these elements need to be standardized and used consistently. The elements in this guide are based on the Dublin Core metadata element set which is both a NISO standard (z.39.85-2001) and an ISO standard (ISO 15836-2003).

Going back to our card catalog system—the Card Catalog is a Metadata Collection. Now think of the rules that get applied to the Card Catalog—the Dewey Decimal system, what is a "title," how do you display the published date. The aggregation of these rules and the element definitions comprise a metadata system.

At HUD, we are going to use the "Dublin Core" metadata element set and will be coding our web pages according to their scheme. Dublin Core—named for Dublin, Ohio where it was created—is the international standard that served as the basis for the metadata appearing on government web pages in the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, as well as many other countries. Should the U.S. federal government require a standard set of metadata, it will undoubtedly be based on the concepts, if not the actual terms, set forth in Dublin Core.

Mandatory Elements

We will be using 8 Dublin Core elements on our web pages:

1. `dc.audience`
2. `dc.creator`
3. `dc.date.created`
4. `dc.date.valid`
5. `dc.description`
6. `dc.language`
7. `dc.subject`
8. `dc.title`

In order for this metadata to be truly useful, we need to understand and use them correctly. The official definitions and additional guidance are found in Section 3, but here's a quick rundown on the elements and what they mean. First, the "dc." part of the element says this element is part of the Dublin Core metadata registry.

1. **dc.audience**—Who is the intended audience for this web page? This can be repeated for as many audiences as needed and we will use a controlled vocabulary.
2. **dc.creator**—Who created or "owns" this document? In most cases, it will be the office responsible for the content. For example, the Office of Housing. However, there will be times that we might want to capture the official (the actual person) responsible for the content—such as speeches given by the Secretary. Or, sometimes we need to capture both the official and their office. For this reason, there can be multiple creators.
3. **dc.date.created**—When was the page created? If unknown, we'll use our best estimate at when the page was created. If you really can't figure this out, use the last time it was reviewed.
4. **dc.date.valid**—initially, this date should be the date the page was created. Then, when we do our quarterly certifications, this is where you'll put the date you last certified that the content was still current and accurate.
5. **dc.description**—What is on this web page? In plain language, how would you describe this web page to someone?

6. **dc.language**—For most of our pages, this will be the code for English. However, on espanol.hud.gov, it will be Spanish, and in those rare cases when we have content in some other language, the codes are provided in Section 3 below. It is possible for a page to be in two or more languages—for example a page that has text in both English and Spanish. For this reason, this element can also have more than one entry.
7. **dc.subject**—What is the subject of the page? Is it homebuying? renting, or something else? We'll develop a controlled vocabulary from which you can choose. Again, there can be more than one subject for a page, so this element can have multiple entries.
8. **dc.title**—There's the title that shows on the page, but sometimes we'll want to capture alternative titles. The home page is a good example. We call it "homes and communities." However, another title could be "U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development HUD Home Page." For that reason, title can also be repeated as a metadata element.

Example Of A Complete Metadata Record

Here's how the metadata for the front page of www.hud.gov might look:

```
<html>
<head>
<title>Homes and Communities: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development</title>
<meta name="dc.title" content="Homes and Communities">
<meta name="dc.title" content="U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Home
Page">
<meta name="dc.creator" content = "Departmental Web Team">
<meta name="dc.creator" content="Office of the Deputy Secretary">
<meta name="dc.date.created" content = "1995-04-15">
<meta name="dc.date.valid" content="2004-09-21">
<meta name="dc.language" content="en-us">
<meta name="dc.description" content="HUD's official website is a clearinghouse of information
and services about housing, homebuying, renting, and community development for citizens and
for business partners.">
</head>
```

Controlled Vocabularies

For two elements – “subject” and “audience” – we are creating controlled vocabularies. That means that everyone will choose from an established list of terms, when filling out these two metadata elements. Controlled vocabularies are important for elements that could have an infinite set of terms. By creating a controlled vocabulary, everyone is forced to use the same terms. This will make it easier to aggregate and find common content.

Controlled Vocabulary for “Audience:” Use the following definitions and terminology for metadata for “audience.”

- **Auditors/Investigators:** People who examine accounting and business practices for program compliance.
- **Community Groups:** People linked by interests and location.
- **Contractors:** A person or business that provides goods and/or services for a fee.
- **Government:** An organization (including its representatives) established by law, statute or ordinance, that performs a public service or mission.

- **Grantees:** A person or organization that receives funding, property, or resources from a public or private source to further the goals and objectives of the source.
- **Historically Black Colleges** (excerpted from Higher Education Act of 1965): Institutions founded before 1964 primarily for the education of black Americans.
- **Homebuyers:** People actively pursuing the purchase of a residence.
- **Homeless** (excerpted from the McKinney Act): People who lack a fixed, regular, adequate, and permanent residence.
- **Homeowners:** People who own a home.
- **Housing Counselors:** People who provide education in homeownership, renting, and personal finance.
- **Housing Industry:** Any person or organization involved in the development, construction, manufacture, finance, management, or sale of housing.
- **Job Seekers:** People looking for employment.
- **Kids:** People twelve years of age or younger.
- **Landlords:** People who own or manage rental property.
- **Native Americans:** People descended from inhabitants of the North American continent before European settlement.
- **News Media:** Those who collect and disseminate information on current events.
- **People with Disabilities:** People with a physical, mental, sensory, or learning impairment.
- **Public:** A general audience.
- **Public Interest Groups:** People who advocate a common interest.
- **Researchers:** People who investigate, collect and interpret data.
- **Seniors:** People 55 years of age or older.
- **Small Business:** People or corporations engaged in commercial activities and certified as a small business by the U.S. Small Business Administration.
- **Students** (modified from the Department of Education): People receiving instruction through a school, school system, or other educational institution.
- **Tenants:** People who occupy rental housing.

Controlled Vocabulary for “Subject”

We are working on this vocabulary now. Until we finalize the controlled vocabulary for subject, do not use that metadata element.

The Details

For those that are interested, here are the details for each of the elements. For ease of reference, the elements are listed in alphabetical order. For each element, you will find the following data:

Definition: The formal definition of the element (e.g., what do we mean by “creator” or “title” so that if someone else were to look at our definition and our metadata, they’d be able to understand what we mean).

Repeating; Some elements can have more than one entry. Therefore, they are repeatable. For example, if a resource has more than one “creator” you can repeat the element to show all creators.

Purpose: Why are we including this element? What is its purpose? How could/will it be used in the future?

Notes: Here's where you will find additional information that might be useful when you go to use the element on your pages.

Not to be confused with: This part of the record will explain, where appropriate, what the difference between this and another element.

Examples: Examples of appropriate or correct entries for a given element. Examples are used in an informal way and are fictitious, as they are only intended to demonstrate the meaning or refinement of the element.

HTML syntax: This is where you will find the actual HTML code to put into the <head></head> section of your web page.

Value Domain: Examples and rules for valid entries. If it's text, how many words, if it's a number, what's the format, etc.

Validation: These are the rules that will be used to determine whether or not the metadata was created correctly or not. For example, the date for dc.date.created must be equal to or earlier than the date for dc.date.valid.

Mapped to: There are other metadata registries and schemas throughout the world. Where the elements express concepts that are the same in other registries, we've tried to "map them" one for one so that others can see the similarities. The other schemas compared are:

- DoD 5015.2-STD
- e-GMS: used by the United Kingdom
- GILS: Government Information Locator Service
- NARA LCDRG

The Elements

dc.audience

- Definition: A class of entity for whom the resource is intended or useful.
- Repeating: Yes
- Purpose: To allow searches for information based on type of audience.
- This element may also be used for creating cross-agency searches based on audience.
- Notes: The value for this element should be selected from a controlled vocabulary. The Department of Education has one controlled vocabulary (found at <http://www.ed.gov/admin/reference/index.jsp>); HUD will create one for our use as well. Controlled vocabularies should be harmonized wherever possible.
- Not to be confused with: -
- Examples: Students, News Media, Homebuyers, Researchers
- HTML syntax: <meta name="dc.audience" content="students"> <link rel=schema.dc href="<http://purl.org/dc/terms/audience>">
- Note: for multiple audiences, it is acceptable to use a single <meta> line and separate entries with a semicolon such as: <meta name="dc.audience" content="students; researchers"> <link rel=schema.dc href="<http://purl.org/dc/terms/audience>">
- Value Domain: The text value must not exceed 100 words nor contain restricted characters.

- Validation: The value of this element is presumed to be “all audiences” under certain conditions: if this element is absent; or if the value of this element is empty, spaces, or null.
- Mapped to: Dublin Core: Audience

dc.creator

- Definition: An entity primarily responsible for making the content of the resource.
- Repeating: Yes
- Purpose: Enables the user to find resources that were written or otherwise prepared by a particular individual or organization. Also can be used to find the individual or organization that “owns” the content for maintenance purposes.
- Notes: Using the job title rather than a person’s name enhances the ability to locate information, although personal names may be needed for legal purposes and/or audit trails. The “creator” element is further enhanced when the full organizational hierarchy and full contact information are provided. Since acronyms may not be well known, it is best to use the full official title or cross-reference an appropriate glossary or explanatory note. Cross-agency portals should use the “creator” element to list the primary sponsoring agency or agencies who manage the website.
- Not to be confused with: Office U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Records Management Division, Office U.S. National Archives and Records Administration, Office of Records Services – Washington, DC, Modern Records Program
- Examples: Person John Carlin, Archivist of the United States
- HTML syntax: <meta name=”creator” content=”John, Carlin, Archivist of the United States”>
- <meta name=”creator” content=”National Archives and Records Administration, Office of the Archivist”>
- Note: for multiple creators, separate entries with a semicolon.
- Value Domain: For personal author names, the text value is not required to be “normalized” (i.e., structured according to lexical rules distinguishing family name, honorific, etc.).
- Validation: The set of metadata is incomplete under certain conditions: if this element is absent or if the value of this element is empty, spaces, or null.
- Mapped to: DoD 5015.2-STD – Contributor, Creator; Dublin Core – Contributor, Creator; e-GMS – Contributor, Creator; GILS – Author (Corporate name); NARA LCDRG – Contributor

dc.date.created

- Definition: Date of creation of the resource.
- Repeating: No
- Purpose: To show the date the information resource was “created.” Among the many uses of this element are to determine how long the information resource has been available, the interval between when the resource was created and when it was last reviewed, or when the content should expire.
- Notes: The organization or individual listed in the “creator” element will usually determine the date created. This date may not necessarily reflect the date the information resource was actually created as there are often resources that are created but embargoed until a certain date and time. Information that was created and made publicly available in another format (e.g., a speech given by a prominent official) at an earlier date may carry the date the information was first made available (as an oral presentation or transcript) and not the date the web version was made available. Suggestions for information resources which were created before the release of this implementation guide include:

- the date created (if known)
 - the date the information resource was last redesigned
 - the date the information resource was last reviewed
- Pay particular attention to the value domain field below. If a date does not include the month in a two-digit format (e.g., January=01), the data for this element will be considered invalid.
- Not to be confused with: Date Valid—The “date valid” element identifies the last time the information resource was updated or reviewed to ensure correctness and currency.
- Examples: 2002-12-02
- HTML syntax: `<meta name="date.created" content="2002-12-02">`
- Value Domain: Date is represented in "YYYY-MM-DD" format, one of the ISO 8601 formats, consisting of the four digit Gregorian HUD Metadata Implementation Guide 2004-09-21 12 calendar year (YYYY), the two digit month (MM) valued from 01 to 12, and the two digit day (DD) valued from 01 to 31.
- Validation: The set of metadata is incomplete under certain conditions:
 - if this element is absent or occurs more than once
 - if the value of this element is empty, spaces, or null
 - if the date is not presented in the correct yyyy-mmdd format
 - or if the "date created" value is a date later than any "date reviewed" value when present.
- Mapped to: Dublin Core—Created, date Created; e-GMS—date.created;

dc.date.valid

- Definition: Date of validity of a resource.
- Repeating: No
- Purpose: To show the date the information resource was last reviewed and certified current and accurate.
- Notes: To comply with HUD’s policies and standards, each web page should be reviewed at least once every 3 months to ensure it is current and accurate. This date can (and probably should) be the same as the date displayed on the page that shows when the page was last reviewed. Pay particular attention to the value domain field below. If a date does not include the month in a two-digit format (e.g., January=01), the data for this element will be considered invalid.
- Not to be confused with: dc.date.created—The date created element is used to identify when the web page was originally made available. Date Valid and Date Created could, technically, be the same date. However, the intention of the “date reviewed” element is to record when the last review, after creation, occurred.
- Examples: 2003-01-01
- HTML syntax: `<meta name="date.reviewed" content="2003-01-01">`
- Value Domain: Date is represented in "YYYY-MM-DD" format, one of the ISO 8601 formats, consisting of the four digit Gregorian calendar year (YYYY), the two digit month (MM) valued from 01 to 12, and the two digit day (DD) valued from 01 to 31.
- Validation: The set of metadata is incomplete if:
 - the date is not presented in the correct yyyy-mm-dd format
 - the "date reviewed" value is a date earlier than any "date created" value when present.
- Mapped to: Dublin Core: Date Valid

dc.description

- Definition: An account of the content of the resource.
- Repeating: No
- Purpose: This is the text describing the web page. The text should help the user decide if it fits their needs.
- Notes: Description should use complete words and phrases that describe the subject or contents of the information resource. The description is often used as the text returned by search engines to give the user a sense of what is available on the information resource. Description may include but is not limited to: an abstract, table of contents, or a free-text account of the content.
- Not to be confused with: Do not confuse with dc.subject, which should use keywords preferably selected from a controlled vocabulary.
- Examples: Definitions of common metadata as applied to government information resources, agreed for the U.S. Federal Government under the E-Government Act of 2002.
- HTML syntax: <meta name="description" content="Definitions of common metadata as applied to government information resources, agreed for the U.S. Federal Government under the E-government Act of 2002.">
- Value Domain: The text value must not exceed 100 words or contain restricted characters.
- Validation: The set of metadata is incomplete under certain conditions: if this element is absent; or if the value of this element is empty, spaces, or null.
- Mapped to: e-GMS—Description; GILS—Abstract; Dublin Core—Description

dc.language

- Definition: A language of the intellectual content of the resource.
- Repeating: Yes
- Purpose: Enables users to limit their searches to pages in a particular language.
- Notes: This element is repeatable to indicate when more than one language is present. The code set for the metadata is assumed to be Latin-1. Setting this element should indicate the ability of the speaker of such a language to extract useful content, rather than simply the appearance of a word or phrase from a given language.
- Not to be confused with: -
- Example: For a web page written in English: Language: eng; For a resource written in Spanish: Language: spa; For a resource written in both Spanish and English: Language: eng; spa
- HTML syntax: <meta name="language" content="eng"> <meta name="language" content="spa"> <meta name="language" content="eng; spa">
- Value Domain: The text value must exactly match one of the natural language identifiers listed in ISO 639-2 which can be found at <http://www.loc.gov/standards/iso639-2/englangn.html>.
- Validation: The value of this element is presumed to be "eng" under certain conditions: if this element is absent; or if the value of this element is empty, spaces, or null.
- Mapped to: Dublin Core—Language; GILS—Language of resource; e-GMS—Language

dc.subject

- Definition: The topic of the content of the resource.
- Repeating: Yes
- Purpose: Enables users to limit their searches to resources in a particular language.

- Notes: Typically, a Subject will be expressed as keywords, key phrases or classification codes that describe a topic of the resource. We will use a controlled vocabulary (which has not been created yet). Department of Education has a controlled vocabulary found at <http://www.ed.gov/admin/reference/index.jsp>
- Not to be confused with: Distinguish from dc.description, which is a plain text description of the web page.
- Example: Homebuying, Renting, Public Housing
- HTML syntax: <meta name="subject" content="Public Housing"> <meta name="subject" content="Rental Assistance"> <meta name="subject" content="Public Housing; Rental Assistance">
- Value Domain: The text value must match one of the choices from a controlled vocabulary.
- Validation: The value of this element is presumed to be invalid under certain conditions: if this element is absent; or if the value of this element is empty, spaces, or null.
- Mapped to: Dublin Core—Subject; GILS—; e-GMS—Subject

dc.title

- Definition: A name given to the resource (web page).
- Repeating: Yes
- Purpose: Enables the user to find a resource with a particular title or carry out more accurate searches.
- Notes: If the information resource does not have a formal title, the creator should establish a meaningful title that is user oriented and brief. Title is commonly used as a key reference result in lists of search results. There can be multiple titles for the same information resource. For example, there might be a title for the informal name of the website (HUD home page), another title element for the formal (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Home Page).
- Not to be confused with: Web site title U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Home Page; Web site title Homes and Communities
- Examples: [document](#) Application by Thomas McCarthy for Admission to Western Branch Soldier's Home
- HTML syntax: <meta name="title" content="U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Home Page"> <meta name="title" content="Homes and Communities">
- Value Domain: The text value must not exceed 100 words nor contain restricted characters.
- Validation: The set of metadata is incomplete under certain conditions: if this element is absent; or if the value of this element is empty, spaces, or null.
- Mapped to: Dublin Core—Title; e-GMS—Title; GILS—Document Title

Links and References

- DCMI (Dublin Core Metadata Initiative) – <http://www.dublincore.org>
- DoD 5015.2-STD -- <http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/html/50152std.htm>
- e-GMS – e-Government Metadata Standard (United Kingdom) <http://e-government.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/00/78/86/04007886.pdf>
- ISO 639 (codes for languages) -- <http://www.w3.org/WAI/ER/IG/ert/iso639.htm>
- ISO 11179 (metadata standards) -- <http://metadata-stds.org/11179/index.html>
- ISO 8601 (recording date and time) -- <http://www.iso.ch/iso/en/prodsservices/popstds/datesandtime.html>
- GILS (Government Information Locator Service) – http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/gils/

APPENDIX D: WRITING STANDARDS FOR THE WEB

1. Target audience is clear and unambiguous – does not attempt to address both citizens and partners

- Who is the intended audience? What do they want to know? What do we need to tell them?
- Don't try to make one size fit all. Different audiences have different perspectives - address them separately. You wouldn't explain a home financing plan to your mother the same way you'd explain it to a mortgage banker. So don't try to make one piece of web writing serve different audiences.

2. Purpose of the page is clear and unambiguous

- What is the purpose of this page? State it in the first paragraph.
- What does the audience want to know about the subject? What do you need to tell them? Often, those are two different things - the audience wants to know things that fall outside your normal purview; you want to tell them things they wouldn't think to ask. Make sure the page anticipates both.
- What should the audience do after they read the page? Make sure it's obvious – what are the next steps?
- If you anticipate that they want to know something that's beyond your scope, take them where they can find what they're looking for through links.

3. Words and terminology are appropriate to the target audience

- What words would your audience use?
- If you need to use a word or term they might not understand, how can you explain it simply?
- Is the content conversational and friendly? Write as though you're talking to someone in their living room or den - you might be doing just that!
- Avoid using professional jargon; and if you must use acronyms, use them only after you've spelled them out once.
- When writing for the public at large, write to an elementary reading level.
- Explain everything! Never assume your audience has knowledge that they may not have.

4. Content is written and organized efficiently

- Keep it short and sweet! People don't like to read on the screen. 79% of web users scan. Use about 50% of the words you'd use in print publishing.
- Break up long pieces into short segments. Let your audience choose how much they want to read.
- Use headers and sub-headers, so people can go right to the sections they want.
- Layer information: short intro paragraphs that link to more in-depth information.
- Organize information in ways that make sense to the audience.
- Normally, limit yourself to one main idea per paragraph.

5. Content is consistent

- Make sure content doesn't contradict other information on the site.
- Avoid duplication and redundancy, except where it's needed to address different audiences.
- Make sure that words and phrases mean the same thing throughout the page and the website.
- Create links. If information already exists on the website about the same subject or about subjects referenced in your document, link to them.

6. Spelling and punctuation are accurate

7. Content anticipates obvious questions

- Be an advocate for your audience. What do they want to know? What do you need to tell them? Is it all there? Did you anticipate their questions? Did you lead them to related materials?

8. Meaning is clear and unambiguous

- Explain everything! Never assume your audience has knowledge that they may not have

9. Links add value

- Do links to outside sites add value and/or relate to the site?
- Do the words used for links describe the link (no click here links)?

10. Graphics add value

- No gratuitous graphics that add page weight without content value

APPENDIX E: STATE PAGE RULES

General Rules

1. Templates

- Every state will follow the same template and format.
- Changes to the template/format must be vetted and agreed upon by ALL Regional Web Managers, and approved by the Departmental Web Manager for Field Operations, before they can be implemented.
- Only the Departmental Web Manager for Field Operations can instruct the contractor to make changes to the state page template.
- Anyone who has suggestions for new or revised content should send it to the Departmental Web Manager for Field Operations, who will coordinate it with the Regional Web Managers.

2. Content

- The center section of the topic level pages is to be used only for inherently local information - links ONLY should go to local (within that state) resources or to specific local content on national websites.
- New content should not duplicate existing content. Use links instead.
- Any content related to program policy must be vetted with the appropriate Headquarters program office to ensure it doesn't duplicate existing content and that it is accurate.

3. **Page titles:** All sections of the state pages – whether topic or lower level pages - must use the title convention:

Title: State Name (e.g., Homebuying: Florida)

4. **Departmental links:** Critical links to key Departmental information will go in the **More from HUD** box on the right. These links will be standard for all states.

5. **Outside links:**

- National non-HUD links should be submitted to the Departmental Web Manager for Field Operations, to be considered for the Departmental pages.
- In exceptional cases, national links to outside websites may be featured on both topic level pages and second level pages, in a box labeled **Links**. However, two conditions must be met before that happens:
 - The national links used must be agreed upon by the entire group of Regional Web Managers and approved by the Departmental Web Manager for Field Operations, and
 - There also must be a box or listing of appropriate links to national pages on HUD's website, again, agreed upon by the entire group and approved by the Departmental Web Manager. The reason for this requirement is that we don't want to send our audience off HUD's website, without being aware of all that HUD has to offer on the subject.

6. **Good stories:** On each topic level page, you have the option to spotlight a "good story" - success stories showcasing specific uses of HUD's programs and other innovative

programs. If possible, you should have a “good story” on each topic level page. See **Appendix F** for more on good stories.

7. **“Turning off” content:** On each of the topic level pages, you may “turn off” a sub-topic in the center section until you have enough local information to make it viable. For example, if you can’t find any local information on food banks, you can turn off that sub-topic on the homeless page.
8. **Using links to national websites for local info:** In some instances, the group may decide to link to the local information on a specific national website, for all states. In those cases, everyone will use the same link text.
 - If for some reason that site does not provide content specific to a certain state, it is better to turn off the text than to direct it to a different URL and cause confusion to people who review more than one state page. In this case, use different text to point to the more helpful link.
 - You may create an intermediary page if that would make your content more usable, as long as the originally intended URL is included on the new page.
9. **Use links:** Use links whenever you can – if you can find a website that is maintaining valuable information, use that link rather than try to maintain that information yourself. If you want to list addresses and phone numbers of homeless shelters in a state, for example, it is much more efficient to link to a state website that is maintaining that data than to try to collect and post the data yourself. It will be very time-consuming to keep those addresses and phone numbers current and accurate. Using links will save you time in verifying web content each quarter, it will save the contractors’ time in doing constant updates, and it serves the audience just as effectively because they get the info they need.
10. **Creating sub-level pages:** Follow good usability practices. If your content will be more usable by breaking into 2nd or 3rd level pages so links are better organized, that’s fine.
 - All subordinate pages must follow all applicable rules.
 - ***You must notify all of the other Regional Web Managers and the Departmental Web Manager for Field Operations when you introduce any variations from the template (e.g., new kinds of information, new second, third, forth level pages, etc.) so that the group can decide if this is something that everyone might want to do.***
 - Do not develop new sections to take the place of mandatory sections that have been agreed upon by the group.
11. **Photos** must be sent to the contractor to edit and turn into thumbnails.
 - The contractor will maintain a photo directory for each Web Manager from which they can select photos for features, etc.
 - Web Managers do not prepare and insert their own photos.

Rules for the Front Page (/index)

12. In general, the front page is the “message” page – the page that Regional Directors and Public Affairs Officers can use to promote the Department’s major initiatives and strategic goals.
 - Be sure to feature our “killer content” topic based “snippets” on homeownership and renting issues.

13. **Features** are news items or good stories, each no more than one short paragraph in length. You may use a thumbnail photo in one or more features. You also may incorporate a link to other information or additional information on the same topic.
 - Features can be used to promote new initiatives or events, such as a visit by the Secretary, National Homeownership month, etc.
 - Each month, all states will have at least one feature highlighting a homeownership or renting snippet of important audience interest – “killer content.”
 - Features should include a header plus no more than 6 lines of text and a link to more information.
 - Links to more information should be at end of the feature paragraph
 - As a rule, your features section should end with enough space to show the word “Highlights” and the first highlight link, within the first screen (at 800X600).
14. **Highlights** are links to current “hot topics” such as NOFAs, training opportunities, grant announcements for the state, and other timely information. These should change routinely.
 - During the period when many grants are being announced, all state pages will have “grant announcements” as the first highlight (by agreement with the Headquarters Public Affairs Office).
 - Some other highlights - links to Supernofa, Faith-based toolkit links, etc. – use common text
 - Other specific highlights are not standardized (mandatory)
 - Highlights must fit on one line. Do not use teasers on highlights.
 - Use no more than 10 highlights.
15. **Quick Links** boxes list links to some of your most requested information – these can change regularly.
 - The quick links box is below Photo Gallery box
 - Do not use the quick links box to link to specific program office sections. The Assistant to the Deputy Secretary for Field Policy and Management has ruled that website visitors – like visitors to HUD offices – are to come through the FPM contacts.
 - Like highlights, quick links must fit on one line, must not have teasers, and must be limited to 10 or fewer.
16. **“Photo Gallery”** showcases good things happening because of HUD programs.
 - Normally, there is one thumbnail photo in the “Photo Gallery” box.
 - Photo Gallery boxes must use the general statement (“see how HUD funds benefit your community”) and can list as many as 3 cities or counties

Rules for the Homeownership Topic

17. **Getting Started** section:
 - Mandatory links/teasers:
 - Housing counseling agencies:
<http://www.hud.gov/local/xx/homeownership/hsgcounseling.cfm>
Note: If you do not have a Housing Counseling 3rd level page, link directly to the listing of housing counseling agencies for your state at
<http://www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/sfh/hcc/states/xxxxxxxxxx.txt>
 - Predatory lending: <http://www.hud.gov/local/xx/homeownership/predatorylending.cfm>
 - Optional link (if including, use standardized teaser):

- Education: <http://www.hud.gov/local/xx/homeownership/eduprgms.cfm>

18. Buying a Home section:

- Mandatory links/teasers:
 - Assistance programs: <http://www.hud.gov/local/xx/homeownership/buyingprgms.cfm>
 - HUD homes for sale
 - Homeownership vouchers:
<http://www.hud.gov/local/xx/homeownership/hsgvouchers.cfm>

19. Owning and Maintaining Your Home section:

- Mandatory link/teaser:
 - Home repairs: <http://www.hud.gov/local/xx/homeownership/hometips.cfm>
 - Avoiding foreclosure: <http://www.hud.gov/local/xx/homeownership/foreclosure.cfm>

20. Other State Resources section:

- Mandatory links/teasers:
 - Legal assistance: <http://www.hud.gov/local/xx/homeless/legalaid.cfm>
 - Help with your utility bills: <http://www.hud.gov/local/xx/renting/energyprgms.cfm>
 - Disaster relief and emergency assistance:
<http://www.hud.gov/local/xx/consumer/disasterrelief.cfm>
 - Health and environmental information:
<http://www.hud.gov/local/xx/consumer/healthandenviron.cfm>
 - Rural housing programs
- Optional links (if including, use standardized teaser):
 - Housing resources for seniors:
<http://www.hud.gov/local/xx/homeownership/seniors.cfm>

21. More from HUD box:

- Homebuyer's kit: <http://www.hud.gov/buying/index.cfm>
- How much home can I afford?
http://www.ginniemae.gov/2_prequal/intro_questions.asp?Section=YPTH
- Mortgage insurance programs: <http://www.hud.gov/buying/insured.cfm>
- How to buy a HUD home: <http://www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/sfh/reo/reobuyfaq.cfm>
- FHA mortgage limits: <https://entp.hud.gov/idapp/html/hicostlook.cfm>
- Settlement and closing costs: <http://www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/sfh/res/sfhrestc.cfm>
- More about owning a home: <http://www.hud.gov/initiatives/homeownership/index.cfm>
- Home improvements: <http://www.hud.gov/improvements/index.cfm>
- Refinancing home mortgages: <http://www.hud.gov/buying/refinance.cfm>
- Reverse mortgages: <http://www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/sfh/hecm/rmtopten.cfm>
- Help save my home: <http://www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/sfh/econ/econ.cfm>
- Approved mortgage lenders: <http://www.hud.gov/ll/code/llplcrit.html>
- Mortgage calculator: <http://www.ginniemae.gov/ypth/index.asp?Section=YPTH>
- Fair housing: <http://www.hud.gov/offices/fheo/promotingfh/atyourservice.cfm>

22. Links box:

- Compare mortgage rates: http://www.federalreserve.gov/pubs/mortgage/mortb_1.htm
- Loan programs for veterans: <http://www.homeloans.va.gov/>

23. Housing Counseling (sub-page): This page provides information on HUD-approved

housing counseling agencies as well as similar programs. Some local governments or other entities offer housing counseling; and though they may not be “HUD Approved”, they may provide good housing counseling options.

- Top section: mandatory link/teaser (if including page): HUD-approved housing counseling agencies: <http://www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/sfh/hcc/states/xxxxxxxxxx.txt>
- **Other Housing Counseling Services and Resources** section: If you do not have any information for this section, page is optional. If you would like to use page and include links, links and teasers are optional. (If not including this page, link directly from Homeownership topic page to listing of housing counseling agencies in your state-- <http://www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/sfh/hcc/states/xxxxxxxxxx.txt>.)
- **More from HUD** box: Housing counseling for Native Americans: http://www.codetalk.fed.us/OLG_homebuycounsel.html

24. (Homeownership) **Education** (sub-page). Page is optional. If including page, the following link/teaser is mandatory: Homeownership assistance programs: <http://www.hud.gov/local/xx/homeownership/buyingprgms.cfm>

- **More from HUD** box:
 - Tips for homeowners: <http://www.hud.gov/buying/index.cfm>
 - Mortgage calculator: <http://www.ginniemae.gov/ypth/index.asp?Section=YPTH>

25. **Predatory Lending** (sub-page): This page provides local resources on predatory lending, discrimination, fair housing assistance providers, and any other fair housing information. All center links are optional depending on the resources available in each state, but at a minimum, a link to legal assistance should be included:

- <http://www.hud.gov/local/xx/homeless/legalaid.cfm>
- **More from HUD** box:
 - More on predatory lending: <http://www.hud.gov/offices/fheo/lending/predatory.cfm>
 - Homebuyer rights – RESPA: http://www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/sfh/res/respa_hm.cfm
 - Don't Be a Victim of Loan Fraud: <http://www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/sfh/buying/loanfraud.cfm>

26. **Assistance Programs** (sub-page): This page lists programs that promote/assist homeownership and/or are homebuyer training programs - sort information by city/town and/or county, if possible.

- **Statewide and Regional Programs** section:
 - Mandatory links/teasers: Homeowner education programs (if you have the page to link to): <http://www.hud.gov/local/xx/homeownership/eduprgms.cfm>
 - U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Housing Programs by City/Town section - optional
 - Wording for both subheadings is optional
- **More from HUD** box:
 - American Dream Downpayment Initiative: <http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/affordablehousing/programs/home/addi/index.cfm>
 - Homebuyer's kit: <http://www.hud.gov/buying/index.cfm>
 - Fair housing: <http://www.hud.gov/offices/fheo/>
 - Mortgage calculator: <http://www.ginniemae.gov/ypth/index.asp?Section=YPTH>
 - Homebuyer rights – RESPA: http://www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/sfh/res/respa_hm.cfm
- **Links** box:
 - Homebuying steps: http://www.freddiemac.com/corporate/buyown/english/preparing/right_for_you/index.html

- Find a mortgage lender:
<http://www.fanniemae.com/homebuyers/homepath/index.jhtml?p=Homepath>
- Loans for veterans: <http://www.homeloans.va.gov/>

27. **Homeownership Vouchers** (sub-page): This page either links to a list of all PHA's and/or lists housing agencies that are participating in this program. Making the voucher available for homeownership is the decision of the PHA, not HUD.

- Listing of "current participants" is optional.
- **More from HUD** box: Questions about vouchers:
<http://www.hud.gov/offices/pih/programs/hcv/homeownership/>

28. **Home Repairs** (sub-page)

- Top section: Mandatory links/teasers:
 - Veterans Affairs Regional Loan Center
 - USDA Rural Development Office
 - Programs by City/Town: Listing of city/town links to programs is mandatory. Places to begin searching for links to programs:
 - CDBG Contacts (<http://www.hud.gov/local/xx/community/cdbg/>)
 - Home Contacts (<http://www.hud.gov/local/xx/community/home/>)
 - Websites of HUD Partners
(<http://www.hud.gov/local/xx/community/partnerwebsites.cfm>)
 - SF Approved Nonprofit Roster – select those approved for secondary financing
(http://www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/sfh/np/np_hoc.cfm)
- **Other Local Resources** section: optional
- **More from HUD** box:
 - Home improvement programs: <http://www.hud.gov/improvements/index.cfm>
 - Reverse mortgages: <http://www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/sfh/hecm/hecmhome.cfm>

29. **Avoiding Foreclosure** (sub-page)

- Mandatory links/teasers:
 - Housing counseling agencies: (links to either level page at <http://www.hud.gov/local/xx/homeownership/hsgcounseling.cfm> or directly to housing counseling agency list at <http://www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/sfh/hcc/states/xxxxxxxxxx.txt> if you do not have a 3rd level page)
 - Consumer Credit Counseling Service (name of organization in your state)
 - Veterans Affairs Regional Loan Center
 - Legal assistance: <http://www.hud.gov/local/xx/homeless/legalaid.cfm>
 - Add foreclosure laws if can find for state.
- **More from HUD** box:
 - How to avoid foreclosure: <http://www.hud.gov/foreclosure/index.cfm>
 - Help save my home: <http://www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/sfh/econ/econ.cfm>

30. **Housing Resources for Seniors** (sub-page): optional.

- Mandatory links/teasers:
 - U.S. Administration on Aging's ElderWeb (drilled down to state): <http://elderweb.com>
 - Housing counseling agencies: (link to either level page at <http://www.hud.gov/local/xx/homeownership/hsgcounseling.cfm> or directly to housing counseling agency list at <http://www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/sfh/hcc/states/xxxxxxxxxx.txt> if you do not have a 3rd level page)

- Discounted utility rates: <http://neaap.ncat.org/programs/lowincome/xx-li.htm>
- Legal assistance: <http://www.hud.gov/local/xx/homeless/legalaid.cfm>
- **More from HUD box:**
 - Information for senior citizens: <http://www.hud.gov/groups/seniors.cfm>
 - Reverse mortgages: <http://www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/sfh/hecm/hecmhome.cfm>
- **Links box:**
 - FirstGov for seniors: <http://www.firstgov.gov/Topics/Seniors.shtml>
 - Eldercare Locator: <http://www.eldercare.gov/Eldercare/Public/Home.asp>
 - SeniorResource.com: <http://seniorresource.com/>
 - ElderWeb directory: <http://www.elderweb.com/>
 - AARP housing options: <http://www.aarp.org/life/housingchoices/>
 - AARP reverse mortgages: <http://www.hecmresources.org/requests.cfm>
 - Home modification resources: <http://www.bsu.edu/welcomehome/>

Rules for the Rental Help Topic

31. Top Section

- **Mandatory links:**
 - Search for a subsidized apartment: Link to section 8 search - (<http://www.hud.gov/sec8/sec8.cfm>)
 - PHAs in state Link directly to the PHAs in your state from the HQ page (PIC) - (<http://www.hud.gov/offices/pih/pha/contacts/index.cfm>)
 - Contact a housing counseling agency: Same link as under “buying” - (<http://www.hud.gov/local/XX/homeownership/hsgcounseling.cfm>).
- **Optional links:**
 - Links to PHA websites: Collaborate with the local Public Housing office to create a page of PHA websites and/or email addresses in each state.

32. Other state resources section

- **Mandatory links:**
 - Tenant rights, laws & protections – linked page
 - Help with your utility bills - linked page
 - Find rural units for rent - link directly to your state in the USDA rural apartment search - (http://rdmfhrentals.sc.egov.usda.gov/RDMFHRentals/select_state.jsp)
 - Independent living centers - link directly to your state from the ILRU clearinghouse (<http://www.ilru.org/jump1.htm>)
- **Optional links:**
 - Emergency rental assistance - external link
 - State housing finance commission - external link
 - State office of community development - external link
 - LIHTC apartment search - link (<http://lihtc.huduser.org/>)
 - Apartment finder (only if HUD-sponsored or -funded)

33. More from HUD box is standard for all states and contains the following links:

- Fair Housing
- Renter's checklist
- What are Housing Choice Vouchers?
- Income limits
- Landlords
- Tenants
- Senior citizens

- People with disabilities
34. **Help with Your Utility Bills** (sub-page): All center links optional depending on the resources available in each state, but at a minimum should link to utility companies and any state energy info, rebates, payment help, etc.
- Links box is standard for all states and contains the following links:
 - Energy Star (<http://www.energystar.gov/>)
 - Energy-saving tips (<http://www.eere.energy.gov/>)
 - Home Energy Saver (<http://www.homeenergysaver.lbl.gov/>)
35. **Tenant Rights, Laws and Protections** (sub-page): All center links optional depending on the resources available in each state. Where available include links to state landlord/tenant laws, Attorney General, and Legal assistance
- Make sure the phone number in the **Need Help** section is that of the local Fair Housing Hub for that state.
 - **More from HUD** box is standard for all states and contains the following links:
 - Renter's Kit
 - Homebuyer's Kit
 - **Links** box is standard for all states and contains the following links:
 - Fair Housing Accessibility First (<http://www.fairhousingfirst.org/>)
 - FairHousingLaw.org (<http://www.fairhousinglaw.org>)
 - Americans with Disabilities Act: (<http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/adahom1.htm>)
 - National Consumer Law Center (<http://www.consumerlaw.org/>)

Rules for the Library Topic

36. The first two bulleted items, "Research" and "Archived features and good stories" are both mandatory using the text and teaser (for the first item only), which must be exactly as it appears on the template, inserting the name of the appropriate state in the teaser line of the first item.
37. The **Research** sub-page includes data about the State: State/local statistical data, income limits, fair market rents, etc.
38. **Archived features and good stories** is a link to a directory of said stories sorted by date and/or topic.
39. The third bulleted item, **News releases**, is optional if you have no news releases in the state. If used, link to a page listing all news releases in the state, by date, including all "old" releases.
40. The fourth bulleted item, **Grant Announcements**, is mandatory and links to a page listing all grant announcements in the state, by date, including all old announcements.
41. The 5th and 6th bulleted items, **Disaster relief and emergency assistance** and **Health and environmental information** are mandatory, as is the teaser line for the 6th bulleted item ("keep your home and family safe and healthy").
- Disaster relief/emergency assistance is a sub page of State/local resources for victims of disasters and/or those who may need emergency assistance. Can cover information

about emergencies common to that state: floods, tornados, earthquakes, hail storms, forest fires, etc.

- Health and Environmental Advisories describes and provide resources on local health and environmental issues. Health examples might include mold, lead paint, meth labs, faulty wiring, bad wells, etc. Environmental issues might include present or former EPA sites, links to FEMA for flood plain maps. Sources of information: State environmental office, State Dept of Social & Health Services (DSHS), Regional Environmentalist, research and sharing of ideas.

42. All specific items under the **Frequently Requested Info** heading are optional

- Must contain no more than 10 bulleted items.
- No teasers
- Each item must be limited to a single line.
- These items are just what they are called – links to local information that is requested by people most often.

43. All items in the **More from HUD** box are set in the template and may not be changed - no additions; no deletions.

Homeless

44. Homeless Topic Page

- In **Search for Services**, a link may be added to clearinghouses or single points of contact if the state has such a service.
- In **Are you at risk of losing your home?** Housing counseling links to the local housing counseling page or to the state portion of the HUD-approved list if no local page is available.
- **Emergency rental help** - link to a list of agencies that provide short-term, emergency rental and mortgage payment assistance.
- **Avoiding foreclosure** links to the local page on this topic.

45. In **Other State Resources** (all links are mandatory except for Jobs and Job Training)

- **Help with your utility bills:** link to the local page on this topic
- **Food banks:** deep link to the state information on the Second Harvest website e.g.: www.secondharvest.org/zip_code.asp?s=48&z=&st=AR&x=4&y=6
- **Food stamps:** deep link to the state information on USDA's site e.g.: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/states/arkansas.htm>
- **Homeless service groups:** link to the state Continuum of Care contacts list currently maintained by CPD at <http://hhhqnd022a.hud.gov/offices/cpd/homeless/programs/cont/coc/ar/index.cfm>
- **Legal assistance:** link to local page on this topic
- **Social Security offices:** deep link to SSA's website for the state e.g.: http://www.ssa.gov/dallas/state_ar.html
- **Homeless veterans** - deep link to the National Coalition of Homeless Veterans e.g.: http://www.nchv.org/network_by_state.cfm?State=AR&Display=Arkansas
- **United Way** - deep link to United Way's browsing page e.g.: <http://national.unitedway.org/myuw/local.cfm?id=browsecities&zip=00000&abbr=AR&ap p=>
- **Jobs and job training** (optional page) link to list of local job training and job placement sites

46. **More from HUD** box contains:

- For the **homeless** link to the national homeless information page at <http://www.hud.gov/homeless/>

47. **Links** box

- Medicaid link to HHS's page at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/medicaid/consumer.asp>

48. **Volunteer** (sub-page)

- The first two links on this page are standard: **homeless service groups** and **Points of Light**. The link for homeless service groups can be deleted if it is found that no applicable resources are found for a given State. Intro teaser is standard.
- **More from HUD** box contains:
 - Volunteering
 - Helping the homeless
 - Links box
 - ServiceLeader.org

Rules for the Local Newsroom Topic

49. The audience for this page is the news media. You should consult regularly with your Public Affairs Officer about the content for this page.

50. Center Column

- **Features/good stories:** again, these are brief – normally no more than one paragraph – blurbs about major initiatives, events, and success stories that HUD wants to call to the attention of the press. (optional)
- **Highlights:** some of the specific highlights used are standard (mandatory). You can turn off a mandatory item if a specific state does not have content for such a page. There are some highlights also that, when used, should use the same text and URLs (e.g., links to Supernofa). The Web Manager has flexibility to use other highlights when deemed necessary.
- **News releases** -- Coordinate these through Regional Public Affairs Officer. (link to templated sub-page is mandatory) <http://www.hud.gov/local/xx/news/localnews.cfm>
- **Archived features and good stories** - (templated sub page is mandatory and works off of Library) <http://www.hud.gov/local/xx/library/archivedstories.cfm>
- **Grant announcements** -(link to templated sub page is mandatory) <http://www.hud.gov/local/xx/news/grantannouncements.cfm>
- **Calendar of events** -- What is happening in your state/program area? List training for partners, project openings, partner meetings, etc. (optional) <http://www.hud.gov/local/index.cfm?state=xx&topic=calendar>
- **HUD offices in State** (link to templated sub page is mandatory) - <http://www.hud.gov/local/index.cfm?state=xx&topic=offices>
- **Press partners** - join our mailing list (optional) <http://www.hud.gov/subscribe/localmail.cfm>

51. **Regional Director** box

- Photo of your RD (optional). Note: we are not posting photos of Field Office Directors at this time.

- Director's office – link to your regional office local contact page (mandatory)
<http://www.hud.gov/local/index.cfm?state=xx&topic=offices>

52. **More from HUD** (mandatory)

- National HUD newsroom: <http://www.hud.gov/news/index.cfm>
- HUD priorities: <http://www.hud.gov/initiatives/index.cfm>
- Public service announcements: <http://www.hud.gov/webcasts/archives/pubservice.cfm>
- About HUD: <http://www.hud.gov/about/index.cfm>
- Submitting a FOIA request <http://www.hud.gov/offices/ogc/foia/index.cfm>

Rules for the Local HUD Offices Topic

53. **Local HUD Offices** page must reflect the policy direction from the Assistant Deputy Secretary for Field Policy and Management that – just as those who come to a HUD office are directed through FPM staff – the web page contact information takes both citizens and partners through the FPM staff.

- **Contact the Director's Office** goes to a page that also is a standard template. The template includes
The address(es) and phone number(s) of the local office(s) in the state,
Email link to the Web Manager mailbox for the state,
Box with information about the Regional Director, including bio and contact info;
Office hours
Map to the office(s)
- Links to the program offices in that region: link to pages for local program content for that state/region. These are templates that should be maintained by the local program staff.
- Link to the locations of kiosks:
<http://www.hud.gov/library/bookshelf15/kiosk/kskalpha.cfm>
- **Toolkit for faith-based and community organizations:** links to the page for your region. This is a template. This page should be maintained by the Regional FBCI coordinator.
- **Toolkit for farmworker/colonias practitioners:** links to the page for specific states in your region (does not apply for all states). This is a template. This page should be maintained by the appropriate SW Border/farmworker specialist outstationed from ODOC.

54. **Program Office Pages:**

- These templates are created with the HQ program office and must be approved by the HQ program manager before we use them. Subsequent changes must be vetted with the program manager before they are implemented.
- On the program office pages, anything in the main topic section must be inherently local information.
- Links for Single Family Housing go to the local HOC page.

55. **Community Planning and Development** - Web Manager has the option of adding a 'highlights' section at the bottom center

Rules for the Common Questions Topic

56. Link directly to the national **common questions** page

June 2, 2005

Rules for the Calendar Topic

57. Link directly to the calendar for this state

APPENDIX F: GOOD STORIES

What are good stories?

- Good things that are happening with HUD funds/programs/initiatives
- Good things that are happening in communities, even if they aren't using HUD funds

Who can submit good stories?

- Anyone - including HUD staff, HUD partners, and citizens
- Prospective "good stories" should be submitted to the appropriate Web Manager

How are "good stories" processed?

- Program office vets the story to make sure the facts are correct
- Public affairs officers review the stories (may want to submit it for a "focus" message, as well as posting as a good story)
- Web Manager coordinates the process and posts the good story
- Web Manager notifies Joanne Johnson, on the Departmental Web Team, so the good story link can be added to our "good story" database. If the good story comes from the Field, notify the appropriate HQ Web Manager about the good story, providing the link

What kinds of information should be collected for each good story?

- Name of "good story" (e.g., St. Margaret's House)
- Location (city, state)
- HUD program(s) involved (e.g., CDBG)
- Amount of HUD funding associated, if available
- Names of any other funding sources (e.g., state/local government funds, foundation, private sector)
- 1-sentence summary (to use as the teaser)
- Description of good story (remember to cover who, what, where, when, why, and how) - no more than 1 page
- Major result (in other words, how does America benefit?)
- Key players in the story (names and phone numbers, if possible)
- Key players at HUD (the person at HUD who knows most about this story)
- If you have one or two pictures associated with the Good Story, attach them in digital format (jpg preferred)

Collecting good stories

- Good stories on state pages should "live" on the state library page.

APPENDIX G: INTERNET CALENDARS

Calendars to announce upcoming events of interest to HUD's web audience are available on each state page and on the front page of www.hud.gov. Program offices in Headquarters may want to establish calendars, as well. Following is guidance on creating content on the calendars.

1. **Ensure That Events Are Appropriate For Our Audience:** The audience is the public and HUD partners. Events should be external. Events limited to HUD employees should not be included. Vague information is not appropriate for posting. Events for a very narrow audience are better publicized through direct, targeted communication with the intended audience.
2. **Choose Events Carefully:** Events should be HUD sponsored or related to HUD's mission. As a rule, we are looking for events that provide training or technical assistance for HUD's partners or potential partners or training/information for citizens, in areas related to HUD's mission. Common sense should be used in submitting events that are not HUD-sponsored. Posting an event may be perceived as endorsing and promoting it. Events which are not HUD-sponsored but which could be appropriate to post would include widely-recognized trade group meetings such as:
 - Mortgage Bankers Association meetings;
 - Association of Housing Management Agent meetings;
 - Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials meetings;Generally, events should not be profit making or sponsored by a for-profit organization
3. **"More" Is Not Necessarily "Better:"** Be thoughtful in choosing the events to put on the calendar. Too much information sometimes overwhelms the audience, and they may not bother to read anything. Add value by selecting the most promising events.
4. **Information Needed For Calendar Entry**
 - Name or Title of Event
 - Brief Description of Event
 - URL (for additional info, if available)
 - Name of Contact Person
 - Phone number of Contact Person
 - Fax number of contact person (if appropriate)
 - Email address of contact person
 - Additional Information (special directions, deadlines for registration, etc.)
 - Start Date of Event
 - End Date of Event
 - Start Time of the Event
 - End Time of the Event
 - Event Location: Address